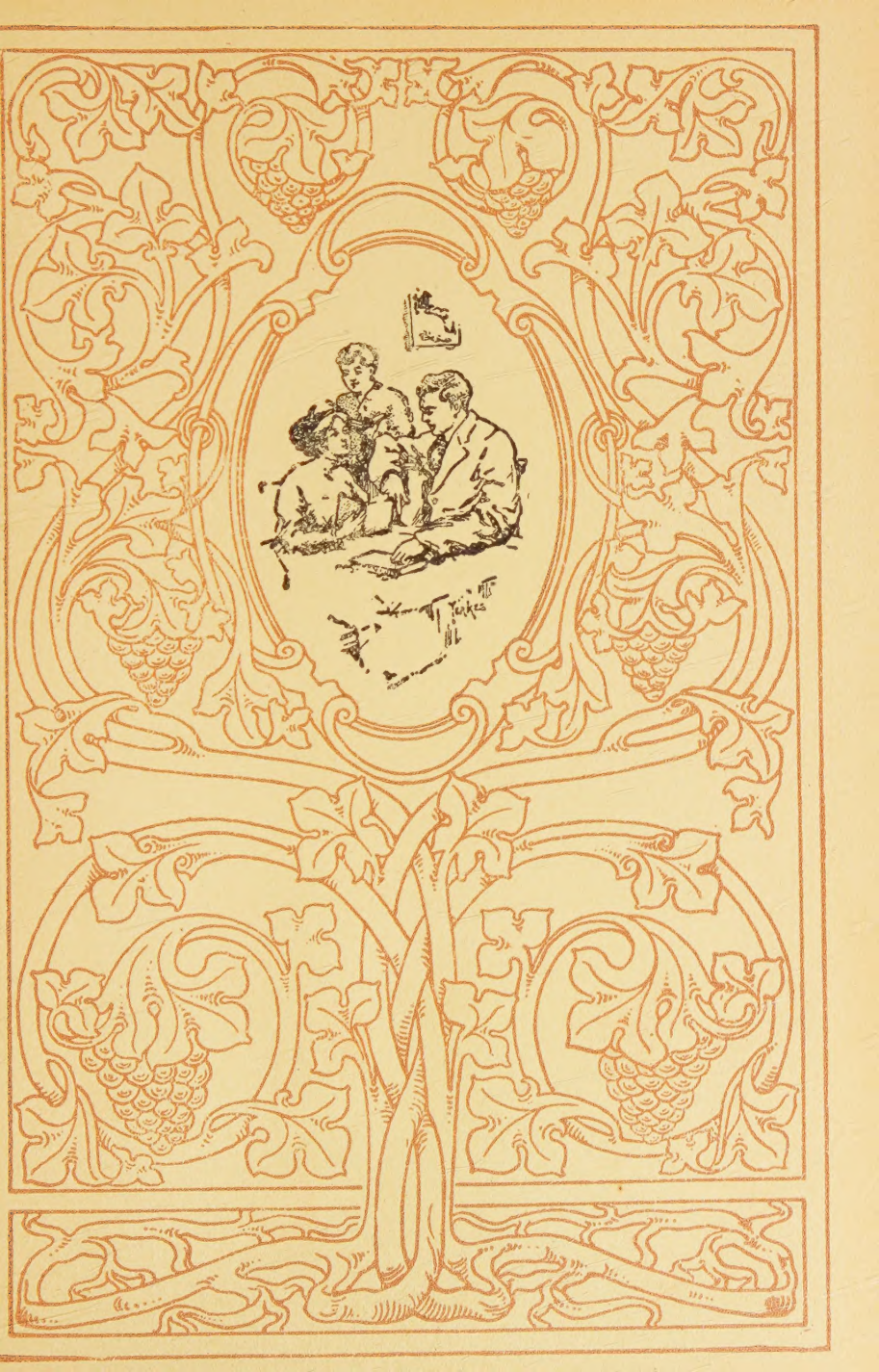

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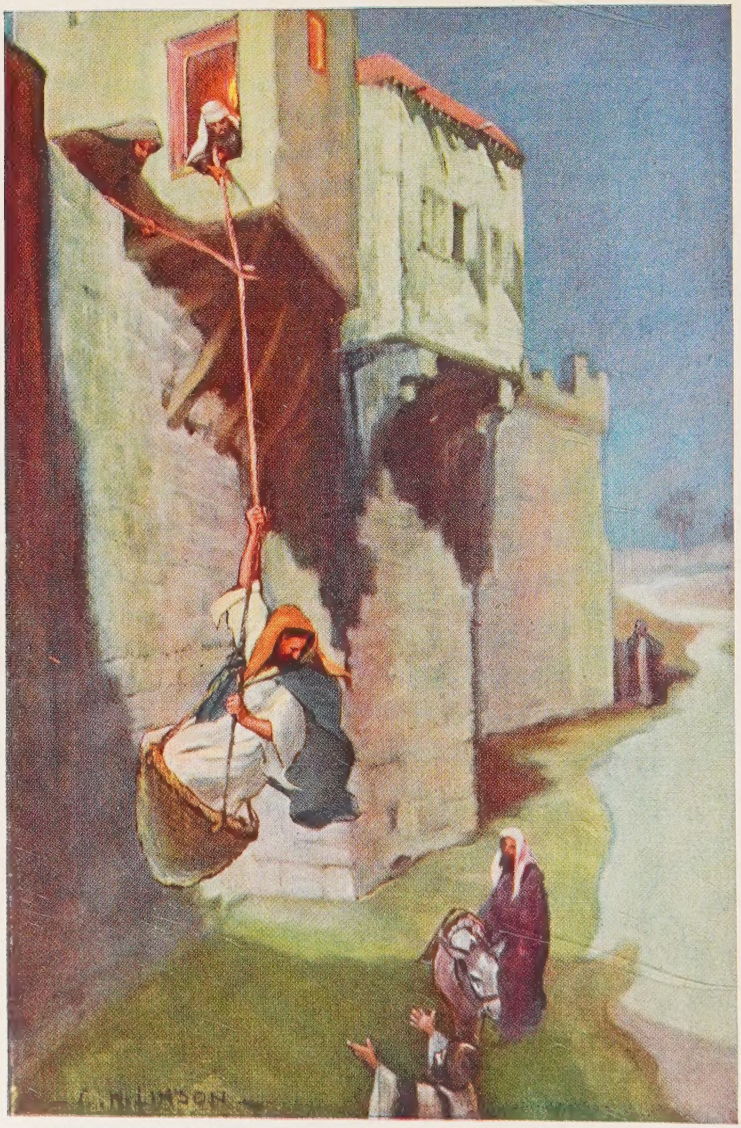

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PAUL'S ESCAPE FROM DAMASCUS.

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WILLIAM E. BARTON, A. M., D. D.
Editor-in-Chief

Into All The World

By

Sara Reese Arnold

assisted by

Gen. Henry B. Carrington, U. S. A.

and

Hon. McKenzie Cleland

VOLUME VII

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST BATTLE

BY
HENRY B. CARRINGTON.
BRIGADIER GENERAL IN THE UNITED STATES REGULAR ARMY (RETIRED.)

It is nearly twenty centuries since the birth of Jesus in the little town of Bethlehem in the land of Judæa, a country still known to all mankind, through the people who first tilled its soil, as the "Holy Land." He was a direct descendant from the royal tribe of Judah, through David, its anointed head, and fulfilled every condition foretold as to the promised Messiah, including origin, birth, and ministry. In all things there was realized full and minute accord with prophetic anticipation.

His earliest ancestors escaped from a cruel Egyptian bondage, sustained, through forty years of wanderings, by assurance of a beautiful future home, to which was given, in advance, the lovely name of "Land of Promise," or the "Promised Land." Its other name was Canaan, so named after a grandson of Noah, the son of Ham, whose children had occupied it after the flood.

This escape from Egypt was secured by the skill of their great Captain, Moses, who was not only the greatest soldier of his epoch, if not of all human history, but also the greatest statesman the world has produced. Through him Jehovah gave to His favored people a Code of Laws, still known as the Ten

Commandments, from which nearly all the fundamental laws now enjoyed by our civilized nations are derived.

This favored people also had an assurance, or solemn covenant, which Jehovah had given to their ancestor Abraham, that "in his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed," and that from the royal house of Judah, there should be born a permanent Deliverer for this people, to be known as the Messiah, Prince of Peace, and that the people themselves would always be prosperous and happy, so long as they obeyed the Ten Commandments, no matter what enemies might fight against them, or try to do them harm.

And now, after two thousand years have passed since Jesus was born in Bethlehem, according to the promise, as the Prince of Peace, it may seem strange to some young people who read in every history, and almost every paper, of the "horrors of war," that I give the title of "soldier," to Paul, whose life was devoted to service under the Prince of Peace, and whose precious words, and noble acts, are as fresh in the minds of all followers of Jesus, today, as when they were first spoken, or enacted, in the regions once traversed by Jesus, Himself.

But, if you think a moment, you will see that every boy is but a young soldier, and that every type of life has to exercise constant struggles that often have the nature of a real soldier's severe endeavor.

There never was, until now, just the same kind of life and life action, as we are in the midst of today. Through railroad, steamship, telegraph, and tele-

phone, all the nations are like neighbors in a country village. To hurt one is to hurt all. To be happy, they must be at peace. At the same time, all nations are making improved implements, as is usually supposed, for real war. But that is much like having a strong police force at hand to "help keep the peace," and the triumph of the Prince of Peace, after all, is as certain as the existence of the God of the universe Himself. Another thing is certain, if we read history with honest purpose, and that is, that the greatest soldiers, in the best sense, were not mere robbers, but patriotic warriors striving to quell disorder and secure for their countrymen a real and abiding peace era.

You must let me explain just what I mean. Every child loves, or ought to love, his father. The old Latin name for father was "pater." From that word came our English word "patriotism." The Lord's prayer begins with, "Our Father." Washington himself was called "Father of his country."

And thus it is that love of country is of the same divine essence as filial love and love for our Heavenly Father.

This is all very simple and natural, for the first impulse of a child, in earliest times, was the protection of the father and the father's home, first from wild beasts hunting for food, and then from robbers. This instinct for a father's protection has never died out.

When Paul lived, the world had become somewhat advanced in science and art, and, as wealth increased and jealous neighbors sometimes endangered life and

property, new weapons for defense, or for punishing the enemy, were invented and had to be used. The men of the land had to be trained to the best use of these implements of war. Paul was a close student of human history and knew every kind of weapon that had been used by his great ancestors, even against Babylon the Great. His own ancestors included such wonderful soldiers as Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and hundreds of others well-known up to this day; and, as already noted, these laid the foundation of much of military art as it prevails today.

Now Paul well knew and believed that so long as the Hebrews served the true God, they would have divine aid. Everybody today, including every boy and girl that reads this story of Paul the soldier, will find that the same principle applies to all of us. Happiness comes from doing right, and wrong never, in the long run, can bring happiness or peace. Paul, therefore, in proudly calling himself "A Hebrew of the Hebrews" and remembering the glorious record of his ancestors, was fully appreciative of the divine protection granted to the ancient Hebrew.

This volume tells the story of the greatest battle in the history of the world. It also tells how a great soldier on one side came through very strange experiences to be the leader in the conflict upon the other side. I am sure that young people who read this volume will feel how great is that battle, and how important it is to have a share in it, and upon the right side.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The letters which make up more than half the New Testament were written by the men whose story is told in the book of Acts. It is to be feared that not many children obtain a clear impression of this important period; and one reason is that the Acts and Epistles are studied separately. The present book fits the apostolic letters into their background, and attempts to make the story consistent and interesting.

This book is for older boys and girls than most of the volumes preceding, but if desired to be used for younger children it may be read and explained by mother or teacher, and possibly a few of the more advanced chapters omitted. For young people of grammar-school age, however, the book will not be too difficult; and if studied as here outlined will give a better knowledge of the years that followed the death of Jesus than most books undertake.

This volume has been prepared under the direct supervision of the editor, who furnished the material for more than half the volume. The chapters on the trials and prison experiences of Paul were written by Hon. McKenzie Cleland, Judge of the Municipal Court of Chicago, whose efforts to deal with the law in the spirit of the Gospel have led to notable results for righteousness, and who for many years has been a Bible Class teacher and Sunday School Superintendent. Paul's abundant use of military figures, derived, per-

haps, from the fact that during the years of his imprisonment he was in daily contact with soldiers, led to the desire that a soldier should treat these chapters. General Henry B. Carrington is one of the most notable of living soldiers of the Civil War. When a young man he conducted the escort that guarded the young Prince of Wales, the late King Edward, over a portion of his American Journey; and he had charge of the guard that conducted President-elect Lincoln from Springfield to Columbus in 1861. He commissioned many of the greatest generals of the war; and at the close of the great conflict continued in the Regular Army, and saw years of service among the Indians. In addition to this, he is author of important works of history, and has been a life-long Bible student. Mrs. Carrington, who had thrilling experiences in the great war, has collaborated with her husband in the chapter on The War that Destroyed Jerusalem.

Miss Sarah Keese Arnold, formerly of the Art Department of Mount Holyoke College, assumed general charge of the work under direction of the editor, and has written a number of the chapters, particularly those relating to the women of the New Testament. Valuable assistance, also, has been rendered by Miss Jennie Lawrence Pratt, who read the manuscript in its revision.

William E. Barton

INTO ALL THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

THE GOSPEL'S NEW BEGINNING

A SPECIAL interest attaches to beginnings. All is well that ends well, as the poet Shakespeare has told us; but the old proverb declares that "A thing well begun is half done." Life has many beginnings, but only one end. The best life does not end at all. It begins again, and keeps steadily on.

We are always starting anew in the same path where already we have been traveling. It is very difficult to say which of the many beginnings should count as "the beginning." In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth; nothing that God created on that first day has come to an end; but every

morning since the world began, God has begun anew. There is evening and there is morning, one day; and the next day has its new creation.

As we descend a mountain road, into the valley below, we see before us many places where the road appears to end; and some where it appears to leap perilously over into a chasm. But each of these seeming endings, by an opportune turn, continues the descent; and the road widens, and the valley grows broader, and the prospect expands as the traveller goes on. Each apparent end is a new beginning.

The Gospels seem to bring the story of Jesus to an end. Jesus lived, taught, died, rose again, and ascended into heaven. But that was not the end; it was the preparation for a new beginning. Jesus on the cross cried, "It is finished!" What was finished? The suffering of the cross; the earthly life and trial. But the life of Jesus was not finished, and His work had only begun.

The work of Jesus did not end on Calvary. What He did there completed only the beginning. It was a part of what Jesus began to do and to teach. Luke had written one book that told us that; now he writes another to tell us what Jesus did afterward. We have named this book "The Acts of the Apostles." It is a good name. But it might with equal propriety be called "The Acts of the Ascended Lord." It is a book of new beginnings; of continued work; of the "greater things" which Jesus had promised to perform through His disciples.

We are to study this book together, and certain other books with it. Yet we ought hardly to call them

books; they are letters written by some of the men of whom this book tells us. And they are full of new beginnings.

A stream has but one mouth, but it may have a thousand sources. Every little spring that trickles down the hillside and loses itself in the brook, is a source of the mighty river into which at last it flows to the sea. The river does not end where it bends, nor where a new stream flows in; it flows on, wider and deeper than ever. And even after a great river, like the Mississippi, flows into the ocean, it is not lost. Not only do its waters abide there, but its own current flows to far distant shores in a warm, life-giving Gulf Stream.

So the work of Jesus began again when the apostles began to preach. It began again when persecution scattered them and they went everywhere telling men the story of the Gospel. It began again when Paul crossed into Europe, and preached in Macedonia, in Athens, in Corinth and in Rome. It never ended anywhere, but still keeps beginning, even to this present day.

It begins again when any good work begins. It begins whenever a man or woman enters into the life of love and service. This is why there is joy in the presence of the angels over each new beginning. Something that is good is begun, and it can never end.

We never know how far our bad deeds will float before they wash up again on our own shores. And we never know how many good things will result from any good deed that we do.

What are the things that Jesus began to do?

It is written that He went about doing good. But the world's need of those who should go about doing good did not cease when He ascended. Men still need to be healed and to be forgiven. All the things He began to do continue to need to be done.

Peter Before the Council

It would be discouraging to know that God could do these things, and that men still needed to have them

done, but that they had been done only during the space of three years.

Jesus may not be doing them in precisely the same way, but He is still doing these same things. He is making men and women more free, righteous and well. He is enabling men to live longer and better, and is filling their lives with hope and blessing.

What were the things that Jesus began to teach?

He taught that God is not only great but loving; that He is not only righteous but merciful. He taught that sin is wicked, and also that God loves and will save the sinner who repents of sin. He taught that though evil may seem to prosper, it cannot finally triumph; and He showed this in His own resurrection from the dead.

The world still needs all these lessons to be taught to it every day. The things which Jesus began to teach He still teaches, of God, and righteousness, and love, and comfort.

Jesus taught the disciples that duty to God and duty to man were not two very different and wholly remote things, but that the two are very much alike and cannot be separated. No one can do his duty to God and neglect his duty to men; nor is it possible to do one's whole duty to men if we neglect God. Jesus taught that these two are not to be separated, and that he who does a good deed to the least of the brethren of Jesus does it to Jesus Himself.

The Book of Acts opens with the statement that the same author, Luke, had written a former treatise, the Gospel of Luke, in which he had told "all that Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day in which

he was received up." This is a very remarkable statement, and one of great value to us. It tells us that the same man who wrote the Gospel of Luke, wrote also the Book of the Acts of the Apostles; it tells us that what Jesus did in all the thirty-three years of His earthly life was but the beginning of His work.

In studying the Acts of the Apostles, and the letters that the apostles wrote during the time that they were performing these acts, we shall realize that these acts recorded are but a few of the deeds the apostles really were doing. We have a part of the acts of a few of the apostles. The greater number of the acts of the larger number of the apostles we do not know.

We know there were many other followers of Jesus than those whose deeds are told here, and that they were busy and faithful; but just what they did we do not know. If we had all the acts of all the apostles we should have a very much larger book.

We shall notice when we come to the end of the book that it stops abruptly, and at a very critical time. Many people have wondered just why it stops in this incomplete way. We do not know. But one pleasant thing to think about it is that the larger book of the Acts of those who love Jesus is not yet fully written. It would require a very large library to tell the good deeds of all the good men and women who have labored in the Spirit of Jesus. And other good deeds are being recorded, deeds done by men and women who are living now. These, too, are among the things that Jesus continues to do and to teach. They are some of the greater works which He promised to do, through His Spirit working in the lives of His disciples.

QUESTIONS

What happened in the beginning?

How many beginnings are there?

Did the life of Jesus end on the cross?

Did the work of Jesus end when he ascended to heaven?

How much does Luke include in that which Jesus began to do?

How may there now be new beginnings of the Gospel?

What did Jesus begin to do?

What is Jesus still doing?

Who wrote the Book of Acts?

What else did he write?

To whom did he write it?

Do you know all the acts of the apostles?

How does the Book of Acts end?

CHAPTER II

THE COURAGE OF THE DISCIPLES

NIGHTS of the olden time were men of courage, and we delight to read of their brave exploits. But some of the bravest deeds were done by men who wore no armor, and bore no weapons of war. When a group of men face opposition for the sake of duty and tell the truth at great risk to themselves, even bad men are compelled to admire them.

One of the finest exhibitions of courage the world has ever seen happened in Jerusalem a few weeks after Jesus had been crucified. The story of the courage of the disciples is one of the finest pieces of heroism of which we have any record. A little company of men and women rose up in Jerusalem to tell the story of their risen Lord under conditions which made even their enemies admire them.

After Jesus had ascended into heaven the disciples remained for a time in Jerusalem. They had friends in that city with whom they stayed and they held daily meetings in the upper room where Jesus had spoken His beautiful words to the disciples. There is an old house now standing in Jerusalem which is believed by

many people to contain that upper room. If we knew it to be so we should count that spot one of the most sacred in the world. There where Jesus celebrated the last supper and enjoyed sweet fellowship with those He loved, the disciples gathered for daily prayer meetings, waiting for the time to come when they should speak their message to the people of Jerusalem. They had not long to wait, and when the message came Jerusalem heard it with wonder.

Jesus had told the disciples that they were to preach the gospel "beginning at Jerusalem." It was the hardest place in the world for them to begin. It was in Jerusalem that Jesus had been crucified; it was in Jerusalem that Peter had denied Him; it was in Jerusalem that they permitted their Lord to stand alone in the hour of His trial, and to go to His death without the solace of their companionship. They had asked for a place at His right hand and at His left, but these places were taken by two robbers. He had told them to bear the cross with Him, but Simon the Cyrenian, and not Simon Peter, had carried His cross up Calvary. The hardest place for us to begin is where we have made our mistakes, and that was what the disciples had to do when they began at Jerusalem.

BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM

Yet Jerusalem was the most important place for their beginning. They were to tell the world that the tomb in which Jesus had been laid was empty. It was

necessary that they should first tell the story to people who could go and look into the door of the tomb and see whether it was empty or not. They were going into all the world, but before they went into even the nearest parts of the outer world they were to tell the story of their new faith to those who could best discover and tell the world whether their story was true.

If men ask for proof of the resurrection of Jesus, one proof is to be found in the resurrection of Christianity. The hope of the disciples was laid in the tomb when Jesus died. All their dreams of the coming of His kingdom ended with the terrible nightmare of His betrayal and murder. They sat in blank despair and utter hopelessness, stunned and speechless in the agony of their disappointment. Suddenly something happened. Those dumb strangers in Jerusalem found their voices. Those timid men who had forsaken their Lord found courage. And they stood before the very men who had crucified their Lord and told them to their face that they had murdered Him, and, what was more wonderful, they declared that their Lord was risen again from the dead. All this was strange enough, but stranger still is the story of the reception of their message. The people who heard it listened with wonder, looked into the empty tomb and into their own hearts that were empty and hopeless and they believed on the Lord who had risen from the dead. His new life brought new life unto them and thousands united with the Church.

We have a record of Peter's sermon, the first sermon that was preached after Jesus arose. He began by defending the disciples against the charge of drunk-

enness, for this was the first explanation that was given by careless onlookers of the new courage of the disciples. He then quoted from the prophet Joel to show how God had promised the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The latter part of His sermon shows how earnest and brave this man had become, who only a little while before denied his Lord.

Ye men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay; whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David saith concerning him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face:
For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope:
Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,
Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption.
Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;
Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance.

Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patri-

arch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day.

Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens; but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,
Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.—(Acts 2: 22-36.)

What answer did the men make who heard this stinging accusation? Did they reply that the body of Jesus still lay in its tomb? They did not. For the whole city knew the way to the tomb and could easily discover whether it was empty or not. Did they crucify Peter as they had crucified his Lord? They did not, for so great a multitude arose to confess faith in Christ that it became unsafe to arrest these intrepid disciples.

So Peter finished his sermon and at its close hundreds of men cried out, confessed their faith, and were

baptized. The Christian Church began its history that day as an organized institution. It started with a charter membership of three thousand, and this great company was gathered in the very city where Jesus had been crucified.

This is one of the most wonderful stories in all the world. Men have tried to explain it in various ways. They have asked themselves whether these apostles told a deliberate falsehood when they said that Jesus was risen from the dead, but men are not accustomed to tell falsehoods in the hope of being crucified, and this was the only reward for the disciples at the beginning. They have asked whether the disciples were deceived in their belief that Jesus was risen from the dead, but these were sane men, who acted with deliberate purposes, and convinced their enemies that they were not drunken nor beside themselves.

The living Lord is attested in the continuous life of His Church. The proof that Jesus is alive is in the power which He gave in the beginning and still gives to those who have faith in Him.

We are to read again the story of the first telling of the Gospel and are to discover how it made its way into all the world. It is a wonderful story and the marvel of it grows each time we tell it. The disciples who began telling the story in Jerusalem themselves carried it into many cities and strange lands.

In this they had help. At the time when they began their preaching there were many strangers in the city of Jerusalem and these heard the apostles preach and many of them believed. As they went out they told the story to others and so it came to pass that al-

most immediately the preaching of the gospel began in distant places.

As for the disciples a new era had begun in their history. A new sense of fellowship took possession of them. They undertook their work with confidence and joy and with a great and growing success.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.—(Acts 2:44-47.)

It is interesting to notice that at the outset the disciples had larger thoughts than that of the mere saving of their own souls. They preached to the people to repent in order that their sins might be forgiven, and they knew what they meant by this advice, for their own sins had been forgiven through faith in Jesus. But they did not think of this alone. In their mind the religion which they preached was a great plan of God for bringing the world to Himself through the Gospel of Jesus. It is very wonderful that they understood this as they did at the beginning, for their ideas of religion had been narrow. In truth, they had much still to learn, for they did not know how large were God's plans for other people. To them the "world" was still the Jewish world, but they were soon to learn how much larger the world was than they had been

thinking. Into all the world they went, beginning with the world close at home, and they told their story with gladness.

There is something inspiring in the way they went about it, gladly, and with a fine recklessness. Fear did not prevent them. Threatenings did not restrain them. They had a story to tell, and they told it with the greatest joy.

"Beginning at Jerusalem." It was the place where the dreadful Cross had run red with the blood of their Lord; the place where their enemies were in power; the place where the doors of the prison swung on easy hinges to receive them, if they testified too eagerly. But it was the place of all places to begin, if they were intending to go out into all the world. It would not have been well for the story that Jesus had risen to have been told first in any other city. And the disciples waited there, in peril but not in fear. They waited till the report was confirmed, and the grave was found to be empty. They waited till the Spirit came upon their own lives and filled them with courage and hope. Then they testified, in Jerusalem first, and then in all the world.

We all have our Jerusalem at which to begin. And our witness for Jesus, to be effective in the world, should be consistent at home.

QUESTIONS

Do you enjoy reading of courage?
Were the disciples courageous?
What gave them courage?
What did they do after Jesus was first crucified?

Where did they begin to preach?

Why did this require courage?

Who preached the sermon on the Day of Pentecost?

What was the result of that sermon?

Where did the Christian Church begin?

Why was it important that it should begin there?

Was there anything surprising about its beginning?

Did it begin with a large or small number of people?

Did the number diminish or increase?

CHAPTER III

THE VISIONS OF YOUTH

OUTH has its visions, and old age its dreams. The visions of our youth have much to do with the achievements of manhood, and the happy memories of old age. The vision of the sculptor boy, carved on the yielding stone, becomes the enduring object of admiration in the years that follow.

There was one sentence in Peter's sermon which we ought not to pass without a little special thought upon it. He quoted from the prophet Joel the words, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

There were no old men among the first disciples. They were all young men. Jesus died at the age of thirty-three and His disciples probably averaged about His age.

There were no dreamers among those earnest men. They were all men of vision.

And the vision which they had was of a risen Savior, calling the world to Himself.

No man ever made a great invention but he first had a vision of it. The thing he was to make was in his brain before he cast it in metal or carved a working

model out of wood, or even drew a plan of it on paper. And when the machine was made, a reaper, an organ, a locomotive, it was merely what the inventor had first had in his vision.

There may be many kinds of vision. A man may see a plank, and nothing beyond; or, he may apply the x-ray, and look through the plank, and see his own hand beyond it.

One may see upon the table a piece of cloth. Or, with a little more accurate vision, he may see that the cloth is the cover of a book. And, with a commercial vision, he may discover that the book is worth a dollar. But, with a vision somewhat different, he may read the book and learn its lesson, and be helped to a nobler manhood.

The ability to see beyond the merely material, to see the real spiritual value of life, this we may call vision. It is a beautiful gift of God to youth that enables it to see visions.

Young people have visions of themselves. They see themselves doing great things, and winning high honors. This is well, if the visions are pure and unselfish. And they should see in their vision how great is the need of the world, and how happy it may be if all men have fine and true visions of life, and make those visions come true.

It is no disrespect to age that gives to it the special privilege of dreaming. There comes to age a time when it is entitled to dream,—to dream of past conquests, to dream of future glory, to dream of the present turmoil and conflict for which it still has heart but no strength. It is as well that old age dreams, and it

dreams to purpose. Many of the young people who read this book are following the dreams of fond parents. They have dreamed of seeing you in high positions. They have dreamed of honor and usefulness

THE LAME MAN AT THE GATE

in store for you, and unconsciously their dream has become your vision. Never despise the dreams of honorable old age. Those dreams, in part, are of you. There are mothers who dream of their boys and girls

doing great things in the world, and the dreams are but the sleeping echoes of their prayers. There are fathers whose dream of a greater success than they have ever made is a dream not for themselves, but a hope to be attained by their sons. Those dreams are your inspiration. They are a part of your rich heritage. Dream on, fathers and mothers. Into those dreams put your fondest hopes for the youth of the present day, and God grant those dreams come true!

Whatever the value of a dream to an old man, however, to a young man or woman one real vision is worth a million dreams. Sleep is the condition favorable to dreams, but most visions come to men who are awake. It was not the sleeping town of Bethlehem but the waking shepherds, who had the vision of the angels and heard the chorus of peace and good will. It was not the multitude who went to bed soon after the sun went down, who found the babe of Bethlehem, but the wise men who looked into the heavens by night, who saw and followed the star. These, who were awake, saw the vision, and found the Christ. The reason that Samuel heard the voice so often repeated was that he was awake. It was at midday that Paul saw, and was not disobedient to, the heavenly vision. It was in the night that Paul saw the vision of the man of Macedonia inviting him to inaugurate that heroic movement from which started the conversion of Europe and America, but there is no evidence that Paul was asleep when it came to him. He may have been, but, if so, he was very much awake afterward. Constantine was wide awake when he saw the vision of the cross in the heavens, with the words, "*In hoc*

signo vinces,"* and by that sign he did conquer. Your visions that are worth having will come to you when awake. It is a reproach to a man of years to be visionary, but to youth it is a sad thing to be a dreamer. Leave, then, the dreaming of dreams to old men, to whom that occupation is fit and proper, but as for you, young people, if you are worth anything in life, you must see visions.

It is vision, rather than a vision, that we need. It is power of vision, insight, that I covet for you. Visions there will be, but power of vision must be back of them. How many shepherds may have passed the burning bush without the power to see its flame! How many fishermen, washing and mending their nets, heard the invitation "Follow me," but had no power of vision to discern in the young Rabbi who addressed them, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" It is not visions we lack, but vision. The mountains are full of chariots and horses of fire round about us, but we have no power of vision. To how many other disciples walking to villages outside Jerusalem and talking of the wonderful things that had happened, Jesus may have appeared, but whose eyes continued holden, so that, when He made as though He would go farther, they let Him go? Their hearts may have burned within them no less than those who were on the way to Emmaus, but their eyes were holden. There was sight, but no power of vision. Where there is no vision, the people perish.

Oh, for this power of vision! We see dimly a light upon the shore as we toil in the early dawn, after our

* In this sign thou shalt conquer.

night of fruitless fishing, and unconsciously we steer nearer it until we hear the voice, "Children, have ye any meat?" but we are so intent upon casting and hauling our empty net, which, in no case can hold anything that we can retain until the next life, that we merely answer and keep on fishing and drift away from the light, and leave the Savior on the shore by the fire which love has kindled, and beside the meal which He has prepared for us with His own pierced hands. Once an old prophet prayed to the Lord, in behalf of a young man, "Lord I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see!" And the young man's eyes were opened and he saw the resources that avail on the side of God, he saw the reality of spiritual things, he saw the power of one man for good, because God is with him.

So let us see visions of good and beautiful things, and let us make those visions real.

QUESTIONS

From what Prophet did Peter quote in his sermon at Jerusalem?

What did he say about the seeing of visions?

Who were to see visions?

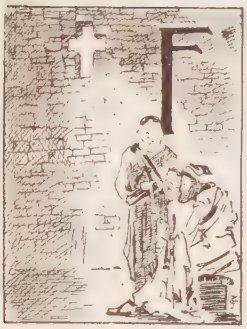
Who were to dream dreams?

Which is better, dreaming or the power of vision?

How can we make our visions real?

CHAPTER IV

PETER AND JOHN IN JAIL



OR a time the Christian Church grew very rapidly. The disciples preached with so much courage as to attract attention, and the evidence they gave for Jesus was living proof so convincing that very many people confessed their faith. The disciples were too many to assemble in the upper room, and gathered regularly in one of the porches of the temple, called Solomon's porch. There they addressed great outdoor audiences, sometimes numbering thousands. For a time no one interfered with them.

The Jews were accustomed to pray twice a day, at 9 o'clock in the morning and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. One afternoon as Peter and John were on their way to the temple they saw a lame man who had never been able to walk. He was lying near the Beautiful Gate. All the gates of the temple were beautiful, but this one was particularly so. Many people, and especially rich people, liked to enter the temple by that gate. This poor man lay near the gate begging. This was a favorite custom in that land, and it continues until this day. Church doors are thronged with beggars asking

money from every one who enters. They seem to find church-going people more liberal than others, for the custom is of very long standing. This lame man expected the disciples to give him money, but Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." The effect was wonderful. The man hardly had faith enough to rise, but Peter took him by the hand and helped him up. And to the man's great surprise, he began to walk. At first his steps were short and tottering, but with each step he gained new courage. Before he had gone far he was leaping and shouting for joy. As soon as he found that he could walk, he went into the temple with the disciples and joined his prayers to theirs.

By the time the disciples had finished their prayers, the news had spread, and a company was waiting at the temple gate. They accompanied the disciples into Solomon's porch, now their regular meeting place, and there again Peter preached to a great multitude.

First of all, Peter denied that the man had been healed by any power that belonged to the disciples. He said, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man, or why fasten your eyes on us as though by our own power or goodness we had made him to walk?" Then he told them it was by the power of Jesus that this man was healed, Jesus whom they had crucified.

Here again we have the words of his sermon and they show the great boldness of the man who uttered them.

But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and

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THE DISCIPLES BEFORE THE ELDERS.

asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And by faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know; yea, the faith which is through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old. Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities. —(Acts 3:14-26.)

While Peter was preaching, the scribes and priests began to gather, and were so much disturbed by what they heard that they called the captain of the guard, and insisted that he should place the disciples under arrest. Acting under these instructions the captain arrested Peter and John and put them in jail over night, for it was getting late in the afternoon, and they could not have a trial until the next morning.

The next morning Peter and John were brought into court. Annas and Caiaphas were there, the very men who presided at the trial of Jesus and sentenced Him to death. Well might the apostles have trembled as they stood in the presence of these men. To make the hearing more impressive, the high priest gathered about him his influential relatives and other notable men, so that the apostles faced a bench of resolute and powerful judges, thoroughly prejudiced against them.

To the surprise of every one the disciples did not show fear. On the contrary they stood and bore their witness boldly to the healing of the lame man and to the power of Jesus.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole. He is the stone which was set at nought of

you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.—(Acts 4:8-12.)

PETER AND JOHN IN PRISON

Such a message as this might have resulted in the death of the brave men who uttered the words. Peter had indeed become a rock when he could say such words as these to the high priest who had crucified his

Lord. But the very boldness of Peter and John and their evident inability to have invented the story embarrassed their judges.

When the high priest gave the disciples their freedom and told them not to speak again in the name of Jesus, they might have congratulated themselves on their release and have given some evasive answer, but they did not do so. Again Peter, and John with him, stood and faced the priest and said, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." (Acts 4:19-20.)

There was no use arguing further with men who showed this disposition. The priests threatened them and warned them and let them go and the disciples returned to their companions bolder than ever and more fully determined to speak the truth without fear.

Their night in jail had done their work no harm. News of their arrest spread all over the little city and people were talking of it on every corner of the town. When the disciples came together again they found their number greatly increased, and when they were able to estimate the additions to their company they found that the three thousand who had come to them on the day of Pentecost had had five thousand added to them. So, within a very few weeks after Jesus was put to death, there were more than eight thousand Christians in Jerusalem; and the people conducted themselves so bravely and so well that they grew in favor in the community, and every day witnessed some new conversion and an increase in the number of disciples.

We must not fail to notice the high motive which the disciples possessed in their testimony for Jesus. They were not seeking personal reward or advantage. They knew very well that to tell the story of Jesus meant that some of them, if not all, were to suffer even as He had suffered. He had told them that they were to drink of His cup, and be baptized with His baptism. This promise was now fulfilled. They had told Jesus that they were able to do this, and they proved to be able. Reckless as they had seemed when they said it, they did not fail when the time of testing came. And they no longer followed Jesus for loaves and fishes, nor for the hope of sitting with Him on an earthly throne, but for the glory of telling the story of Jesus to men who needed to know it, as they knew it.

The testimony of the lame man that had been healed was added to their own; and the testimony of others who were helped to better habits and hopes was added daily. There is no witness for Jesus so valuable as the consistent testimony of those who love Him. It was this that perplexed the enemies of the disciples; they could not deny what these men told, especially when the man who had been healed was with them.

Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man that was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we

do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been wrought through them, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.—(Acts 4:13-18.)

But when the apostles were released from prison, and with no promise of silence binding them, they went at once to their own friends, and talked the matter over. They realized what they were facing. They were free, but in hourly peril. The priests and elders had let them off with a solemn warning not to speak again in the name of Jesus. They did not mean to obey that warning, but they knew what it might cost them to disobey.

What did they do?

They prayed about it. They remembered that back in the Psalms it had been said that the nations were arrayed against the Lord and His Anointed, but that God had promised that the rage of the heathen should not destroy the reign of His Son. Yet Jesus had died, and His disciples had been imprisoned and were facing other dangers. They told God all that was in their hearts.

And they, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our Father David thy servant, didst say,

Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the peoples imagine vain things?
The kings of the earth set themselves in array,
And the rulers were gathered together,
Against the Lord, and against his Anointed:

for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to come to pass. And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus. And when they had prayed the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness.—(Acts 4:24-31.)

When brave men and women face a common peril, and do it for love and duty's sake, they come into very close brotherhood. The brotherhood of the disciples was very beautiful. Peter no longer asked jealously what John was to do. James and John were not longer seeking the places of honor. They were all suffering together, and rejoicing together.

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the

Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need. —(Acts 4:32-35.)

There is a value to us in what the disciples suffered. If they had been honored at once, and rewarded, we might have had reason to fear that they had added a little to the story of Jesus because people liked to hear it, and were willing to pay those who told it. But they suffered for Christ's sake, yet did it with rejoicing, and in sweet brotherly love.

And this story of courage and truthfulness is one of the finest in all the world. For men have never shown themselves more brave and brotherly than did the disciples who suffered imprisonment, and even death, for the joy of living and dying together in the fellowship of the Gospel. It is this which makes the story so full of interest, for all people whose hearts are right admire truth and courage and fine friendship; and all these were shown in those days when men were sent to jail for telling the story of Jesus.

The jails of those days were not pleasant places. But out of them came some of the bravest deeds that men have known.

QUESTIONS

How often were the Jews accustomed to pray?
What did Peter and John pray?

By what door did they enter the Temple?

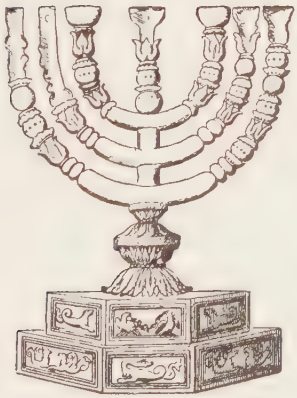
Whom did they find there?

What did they give to the man who begged money from them?

What was the effect of this miracle?

When the disciples were arrested how did they behave?

Were they conquered by being put into prison?



CHAPTER V

THE HEROISM OF STEPHEN

THE chapter just before this tells of the remarkable growth of the Christian Church in Jerusalem. The apostles became greatly encouraged because of their wonderful success. Each day, in spite of all opposition, the new converts could be counted by the hundreds. The disciples were everywhere followed by crowds of adherents. The streets were filled with sick men, who believed the apostles could heal them; they came from everywhere about Jerusalem to see and hear for themselves of the new religion and its wonderful cures.

To organize this work was a heavy responsibility for the apostles. This handful of twelve inexperienced men had to serve a large congregation, not only as preachers, but as doctors, lawyers, and counselors. There was work enough for ten times as many men. Anyone who has ever taken Christmas dinners into a very poor district, knows how hard it is to carry the basket through a crowd of pleading little faces to some family still more needy. So it was with the apostles: they were constantly hearing murmurs of disappointment from people who felt neglected.

Accordingly they called a special meeting of the church, and asked the members to select, from their own number, seven men to do a kind of settlement work, especially among the foreign population of the city. These men must be trustworthy and reliable, of good judgment and common sense. Moreover they must have faith and be loyal to duty. So the apostles warned the congregation to choose carefully from among them, the men most worthy of this office.

A murmur of discussion broke out over the audience, when the question was put to vote. But almost instantly they named Stephen. There could be no doubts about Stephen; he was a pillar of the church. The people knew from the way he carried himself that he was a man of force and courage. He had a way of squaring his shoulders, and holding his head high, that spoke of authority, and commanded respect. Yet, in spite of his energy, he possessed an inward calm and poise of manner that stood for patience through trial and strong faith. So Stephen received a unanimous vote. This election was a sacred matter to the early Christian Church. When the seven were chosen, the apostles held a little service of ordination to pray over the deacons and bless them.

Then these new officials set about their work. They visited the houses of the poor, gave out money and clothes, and even preached occasional sermons. Stephen was their leader or guiding star; he acted as captain of the seven. He spurred them on to new undertakings. The number of converts grew daily larger. So great was Stephen's faith, so wonderful the power of his personality that he, too, healed many

diseases. God wrought even greater miracles than that, through Stephen, for He made good men out of bad. He spoke with telling force. He was fearless in his accusations. If a man did wrong he told him

THE TRIAL OF STEPHEN

so in a frank, outspoken way. He never tried to gain popularity by shielding the wrong-doer. Stephen never preached to fill his church. His only purpose

was to show men the difference between the right and the wrong, the true and the false life.

First of all, he saw to it that his own life was what it ought to be, pure and strong. Furtheremore he did not draw any sharp lines between classes. He was just as ready to help a Jew as a Gentile; and this fact hurt his reputation with many of the aristocratic Jews, who set themselves above all other sects and nationalities.

Stephen's blunt manner antagonized many people. A wicked man does not enjoy hearing about his sins. He prefers not to see his particular kind of wrong-doing held up to ridicule. The greater his sins is, the more violent is his wrath, when he is accused by a man whom he knows to be better than himself. Hence Stephen's enemies grew and multiplied even faster than his converts. He felt the dissension. Often when he was preaching to a crowd, he saw groups of angry-faced men on the outskirts; men with clenched fists, who shook their heads in rage. But Stephen had no time to worry about what these evil-looking men might be plotting. He was full of the glory and success of his work. His power grew; his audiences were constantly increasing. The force of his words was irresistible. People listened to him in spite of themselves and believed. Yet all this time his enemies were making their secret plots. They called clandestine meetings to devise schemes for his undoing. They decided to accuse him of something, of anything, it did not much matter what. They would turn or twist something he had said to call it blasphemy. In their hearts they knew such conduct was

all false, but what did that matter so long as it answered their purpose. Next they held meetings of their own to discuss ways and means. They talked the matter over excitedly on the street corners. Their loud voices attracted some passers-by. A wicked man is often very eloquent; his very deceit nerves him up to great efforts. This little group attracted other grumblers. Soon they had enough people together to make a raid. Before they had time to consider what they were doing, while their rage was still at white heat, the leaders hustled them through the streets to the place where Stephen was holding a meeting. They broke in on it, scattered the audience in every direction, triumphantly carrying Stephen off to trial before the Sanhedrin.

The whole trial was a mere makeshift, carried on in a high-handed way. The witnesses were instructed not to bother with facts, to say anything to make a clear case. Taken all in all a more evil-looking crowd of men could not be found to-day in any great city. And there in their midst sat Stephen; his strong face calm and untroubled. "And all they that sat in the council looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

They recognized their guilt through his purity, but the trial went on. As a pretense of fairness they asked him to defend his cause. Yet everyone knew he could say nothing to change the verdict. It was all settled before the trial. When Stephen looked over the faces in the room, he knew that his case with them was hopeless. He could do nothing more than to preach them one last sermon. It was a brave and

daring man that stood up in a court of his enemies, to accuse them of wrong. Yet Stephen began as simply as if he were talking to a Sunday morning audience. He started out with a story, a long story of their forefathers and of Moses. He reminded them of the many sacrifices Moses had made for the children of Israel, how he brought them himself out of their affliction in Egypt through the Red Sea and the Wilderness. And then what did these ungrateful people do, but turn against Moses to worship idols and betray their God. He told them this story to make them see that they had done exactly what their fathers did. As the children of Israel were untrue to God, so these men were false to Jesus Christ. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye."—(Acts 7:51.)

Saul at the Stoning of Stephen.

As your fathers were betrayers, so are you betrayers and murderers of Christ. The angels of the Lord

have attended you and you paid no heed. You have listened to lessons of truth and uprightness, of love and faith, still you have hardened your hearts against them and there is no good in you.

At every word these false witnesses grew more angry. Their faces were hard with sin. Though they had listened to the truth, it had not touched their consciences, in their wrath they had no power to reason.

Stephen knew his audience. He would not plead with them for his life, he could only make one last appeal to do right. He made no efforts to wheedle them; he struck out as fearlessly as if he really hoped to make good men of them. When he finished speaking he knew that the crisis had come. These angry faces meant violence. Yet Stephen stood before them unmoved. He was not afraid of them, let them do what they would with him. As he stood there alone, all unprotected, the glory of his faith shone in his face. His courage was from God, and he called out to them that God was with him.

"Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." This was the signal that aroused the mob. Their cries were deafening. They rushed upon Stephen, carried him without the city gates and there stoned him.

The first stones, according to Jewish custom, had to be hurled by the witnesses. These witnesses laid their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul. If this were the only time the name Saul occurred in the Bible, it would be passed over without notice or quite forgotten. But because we know what a very great man this Saul turned out to be, and be-

cause we expect to hear a great deal about him later on, we are very much interested in the few things said about him right here. It was Saul's part in these first persecutions that made him such a very powerful worker for Christ later on. It sometimes happens that men who have been very wicked in their youth, later become the most effective workers. Even here Saul was full of fiery energy. Anything that he put his hand to went through. After looking on at the stoning of Stephen, he led the assault upon the Christian church himself, and even broke into the houses and carried off, as prisoners, the very men whose ranks he later joined.

Yes, this mad mob stoned Stephen. He had no power but the power of his faith to withstand them. They might kill him, but they could not make him a coward; they could not daunt his fearless spirit. He knelt in prayer, saying: "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." And his last words were almost the words of Christ on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Stephen's words were these: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And when he had said this, he fell asleep Just "fell asleep," so calmly did he die.

The lesson of Stephen's death is a hard one for us to understand. Whenever any great disaster occurs, when a man is killed just when he seems to be doing the greatest good, we ask ourselves, why does God in His infinite wisdom let this thing happen? Why is the good man taken and the bad man left? At the time we cannot answer our question. It is only after many years have passed and we look back on the life

in its true relation to other lives, that we can say honestly, "This man has taught us nobler lessons of courage and truth in a few short years, than another could have done in three score and ten."

QUESTIONS

What responsibilities came upon the apostles?

In what way did the people look to them for guidance?

Whom did they call to their assistance?

How many deacons were Jews?

What do you know about Stephen?

How did he offend the Jews?

Was his trial a fair one?

How did he behave when he was on trial?

What was the result of his trial?

CHAPTER VI

THE ADVENTURES OF PHILIP

CHURCH life has its contrasts which stand out as distinct as those pictured in story-books. Because we cannot bear to have every story tragic, most authors even as far back as Bible times tell a happy tale after a sad one. Thus, after the death of Stephen, the very next story told is about a man who lived a very happy life. Everything went his way, and if he had any great sorrow the story-teller passed over that part. When the people chose deacons for their church they named Philip next after Stephen. He was of a type entirely different from Stephen. His manner was more quiet and gentle; perhaps some people thought him more tender and sympathetic. Anyway, the two worked together splendidly. Stephen was the leader, who went ahead fearlessly, but Philip won the people through his quiet dignity and friendly interest.

Nothing is said about Philip's work in Jerusalem. The people were so busy talking over Stephen's miracles, his converts, and his enemies, that they neglected to say anything about Philip. Yet all this time, we know, he was working so silently and faithfully that,

when Stephen died, he was ready to step into his place. So it may be with each one of us, while we are doing the little things thoughtfully, we hardly realize that we are preparing to take a higher place. Sometimes we have to wait so long for the opportunity that we grow discouraged, and think that perhaps it is not worth while after all. Then we become careless, so that, when the chance offers, we are unfit for it. But Philip was ready. He assumed the leadership, rallied his little band of faithful followers and prepared them for service. How much that service was needed we will quickly see.

While the Christian Church had been growing so rapidly, apparently without hindrance of any sort, the wrath of the unconverted was smouldering like a slow, smoky fire. But the moment some of their leaders were bold enough to stone to death a deacon, they all took fire immediately. That spectacular death appeared to them as a great success for their side. They were keen for the fight, eager for more persecutions. With Saul as leader—a violent, headstrong leader he made, too—they mobbed the Christian Church and even went into many houses carrying away the Christians to prison. So the deacons could no longer work in Jerusalem unmolested.

Many times Christ had tried to show His disciples how important it was that they carry the Gospel to all peoples in all countries. He had said to them, "Go ye into all the world," and still, up to this time, not one of them had left Jerusalem. It had never been the fashion for men to go out as missionaries. The Jews had another point of view. They had always

looked upon themselves as God's chosen people, the only people worth saving. Jerusalem was the capital, the city of the temple; hence all men should worship at Jerusalem. It was not befitting the dignity of a priest that he go out in search of men to bring them into the temple. Christ preached salvation to all men. But it seemed to the Jews such a very strange lesson that, while everything went smoothly at Jerusalem and there was so much work to be done right at home, no one of them thought very much about the missionary lesson. It was too great an experiment to bother with, while there was so much work to be done all about them. Perhaps that is one reason why Stephen had to die. If he had flattered his enemies; if he had told them that, though they had done wrong, they were by no means the worst persons in the world; in short, if Stephen had not been stoned, then the disciples might have forgotten all about this missionary lesson. But God willed that the story of Christ be carried around the world.

Philip was left to think this problem out for himself. It was hard for him to give up his work in Jerusalem. A short time before everything had looked so bright; the disciples seemed to be doing so much good; and now the high tower of their hopes had fallen, and Philip sat among the ruins, thinking how best to advise his friends. He must have prayed over the matter often, and, if he had had a New Testament, he would surely have read it. Instead he told himself over again the story of Christ's life and teaching. When he came to the story of the Good Samaritan, it attracted his attention especially.

A Samaritan meant to a Jew what in later times a barbarian meant to a Roman, or a negro to a Southerner. "Samaritan" was a kind of byword of inferiority; it was a good name to call a man for whom one had little respect. Still Philip paused over this story, and he heard again the words of Christ when he said, "Go ye into all the world." Perhaps Christ wished to have him go to Samaria. A rumor had recently come to his ears that some man was doing a great deal of harm in that God-forsaken country, setting himself up to be a worker of miracles and making those poor ignorant people believe he had been sent from God. Philip thought the Samaritans might need him just at this time.

Thus it happened that Philip was the first missionary, and Samaria the first field. He had no Mission Board to give him advice and pave the way; he had no church to give him farewell presents. He simply went straight to the city where this false teacher, Simon, was working, to find this man, who was making so much trouble. He soon discovered that things were even worse than they had been reported. For a long time, Simon had been using witchcraft and every sort of sleight-of-hand to do things which seemed to the people miracles. Thus he made these trusting people do anything he pleased, and all the while they believed he was telling them the truth. From the least to the greatest no one attempted to dispute his right; to a man they had faith in him. All this success made Simon very complacent; he was flattering himself to think how clever he had been in deceiving everybody. But he had not counted on Philip. It

was as Abraham Lincoln has said: "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you can not fool all the people all the time."

Simon's power had reached a turning point. There were some people he could no longer fool. Now the spirit of the Samaritans was very different from that of the Jews. To many people in Jerusalem the truth was unpleasant, they preferred not to hear it. When the disciples tried to teach them, they were turned out of the city. But in Samaria it was different. These people had very few advantages. But they were eager to learn. They were enthusiastic and interested in the sermons they heard. So, as he "preached Christ unto them," Philip had wonderful success from the very start. The story was very vivid in his own mind, so that he could tell it clearly and forcefully. It was a wonderful, new story, the like of which they had never heard before. Then, when he had taught them about Christ, he went among them as Christ Himself would have done, to cure those that had palsy or to heal the crippled. So it is no wonder there was great rejoicing in that city, everyone was well and happy, with the wonderful story of Christ in his heart.

We have seen that Simon was a very clever man. If he had taken the easiest course, he would have tried to retain a few faithful followers. No man likes to be stripped of his power. But Simon was wise enough to see he could do nothing against so great a man as Philip. For this reason he listened to Philip very humbly, and was sorry for the harm that he himself had done. He opened his eyes wide over the miracles

Philip could perform. He knew all the tricks of the trade, but this was no sleight-of-hand. "Then Simon also himself believed; and being baptized he continued with Philip." Philip thought his friends in Jerusalem would be glad to hear how fast the work was progressing in Samaria, so he sent word to them about it. A special meeting was held to read this letter, and it was voted to send Peter and John to Samaria. No doubt great preparation was made to receive those renowned guests. The day of their arrival was a great holiday in that Samaritan city. And first of all Peter and John prayed with these people, "that they might receive the Holy Ghost." Then the apostles put their hands upon them and blessed them.

When Simon saw the change which came over these people when they received the Holy Ghost, he did not understand what it meant, but he longed for the same power. So he went to Peter offering him money if he would show him how to transform men by placing his hands on them. But Peter scorned his money. The gift which Peter had could not be bought with riches. Money can never make a good man out of a bad; it may buy a fine house with plenty of servants and automobiles, but it cannot buy a kind heart nor a happy life. Simon had many lessons to learn before he could teach men how to live. So Peter told him openly that he had been a wicked man, that his heart was not right, that first he must pray God to forgive him all his wrong doing. Simon knew this was the truth and he was very much discouraged, for he did not well know how to pray, and he pleaded with Peter,

saying: "Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." After they had spent several days in this city, Peter and John went back to Jerusalem, preaching in many towns on the way.

The Samaritans had accepted the story of Christ and had received the Holy Ghost. They now must try to live out their faith in their lives, and in this Philip could not help them very much. So that now when they really did not need him any longer, God had other work for him. One day an angel appeared to Philip, saying: "God wishes you to go from Jerusalem to Gaza." Philip did not ask: "Lord, why to Gaza." If he had any question he did not put it into words, though of course he did not understand why God wanted him to leave a country so populous as Samaria and go down to Gaza through the desert, where he might not chance to meet anyone. Nevertheless "he arose and went."

One day he was walking along a desert road down near Gaza, wondering just what he was to do, when, all of a sudden, he heard wheels behind him, there was a cloud of dust, and then he saw a splendid chariot, surrounded by servants, and in it was a man in the most gorgeous robes. Something said to Philip, "Go speak to that man." Now the man in the chariot was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, the treasurer of the Ethiopian queen, which meant that he was one of her chief advisers, and a very wealthy and important person. This man had gone up to Jerusalem, just as he did once every year, to worship at the temple. Because he was not a Jew, he could not go into the tem-

ple, but he was allowed to worship as a proselyte of the Gate. Now he was returning home after the festival, and because the road was uninteresting, he read, as he went along, from a book in his lap, and, when Philip saw him, wore a puzzled expression. Something that he read perplexed him. So Philip hailed him and the two men exchanged greetings. "I see you are reading something," Philip said to him. "Do you understand it all?" Then the eunuch confessed that he did not, and he asked Philip to come up and sit beside him, while he read the passage that bothered him. So he began to read from Isaiah—words which Luke takes pains to quote in his story of the mission of Philip:

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,
So he openeth not his mouth:
In his humiliation his judgment was taken away:
His generation who shall declare?
For his life is taken from the earth.
—(Acts 8:32-33.)

When the Ethiopian had finished reading, he asked Philip, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet thus? of himself or of some other?" Now the eunuch had never heard of Christ, so how could he understand the passage he read? Then "Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus." The eunuch was greatly moved by the story, so, when they come to a little pool on the way, he stopped his chariot, saying "Behold, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised?" Until Philip

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PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.

went into Samaria only Jews had been baptized, and now he was going to baptize an Ethiopian, though to the orthodox Jew that meant heresy. Then they went down to the water and the eunuch was baptised. When he reached his chariot again, he turned to ask Philip to go on with him, but Philip had disappeared and the eunuch never saw him again.

God had other work for Philip. He sent him to Azotus, and then to all the cities between Azotus and Caesarea. Everywhere Philip did a great deal of good work, because he was obedient and full of trust in God, because he was alert and eager to do good, and because he was broad-minded enough to see that many men not Jews were worthy of being saved.

Tradition tells us that Caesarea was Philip's birthplace, and that when, after many years of service, he returned to his native city he settled in it with his four daughters. Here St. Paul found him, twenty years later, and was royally entertained by him. According to this story his four daughters were a great joy to him. One of them, named Hermione, practiced medicine, and in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian was thrown into a caldron of boiling water and is said to have escaped without injury. This is the old story; but we do not know that it is true.

QUESTIONS

Who was Philip?
Where did he preach first?
Where did he go afterward?
Who had been there before him?
What do you know about the Samaritans?

Whom did he encounter in the City of Samaria?
What was the result of this contest?
What notable person did he meet on a journey?
What was this man reading?
How did Philip explain to him?
What happened afterward?

CHAPTER VII

WHAT HAPPENED TO TWO LIARS

EVERYTHING was running smoothly in the Christian Church at Jerusalem. For a long time there had been no serious disputes. The members were working together happily. In fact it looked as if this peaceful state of affairs might continue for a long, long time. Every man seemed to be kind and generous to his neighbor, as well as loyal and faithful to his church. The membership was large and prosperous. This church had broken away entirely from the temple and synagogue. It was now quite independent, for which reason the responsibility of each member was all the greater. The men with money saw to it that the poor did not go needy. If any unfortunate families were doing without food or clothes, some man was always ready to sell a piece of property to obtain the necessary money to satisfy their needs.

It was a custom in the Church for any man who had sold a house or lot for a charitable cause to bring the money with him to the church and place it before the apostles during the service. This did not mean that every member shared his money equally with

every other. It was very different from the "community system," according to which a group of people put all their money into a common bank to draw out equal amounts. That plan has been tried many times and has always failed, because it encourages the shiftless and lazy. The Christians were not trying such a plan. Each man held his own property until he was ready to give it up, and even after that the money was his to do with as he wished. It was nothing but the spirit of generosity prevalent among the Christians at Jerusalem which prompted them to make large gifts to the poor. The apostles preached to them powerful sermons and taught them so vividly of Christ's life of unselfishness, that almost everyone of them was inspired to do something good.

The community has never yet been found in which every man without exception did what was right. So it happened just now, when the Church was most flourishing, that two people were found falsifying. This was just the time, they thought, to get the better of the Church, and to deceive those in authority, while everything was running along so smoothly and nobody was looking for trouble. Cheating seemed the very easiest thing in the world.

In this community there lived a man well known to all the parishioners, Ananias by name. He and his wife, Sapphira, were, no doubt, much respected citizens. Now it happened just at this time, that Ananias made a good sale of a valuable piece of property. He was a man of moderate means and this ready money looked pretty fine to him. So he carried it home and showed it to his wife. Of course it occurred

to them both that this was a splendid opportunity to make a large gift to the Church. All their friends had been doing it. In fact, one reason why Ananias had sold his property was that he might make as generous a gift as his friends had been doing. The other men who had made gifts, like his friend Barnabas, were still pointed out to strangers as public benefactors.

Ananias and Sapphira.

It was a fine thing to have your name circulated as a generous man. Ananias and Sapphira wanted to be popular for the same reason. And yet that money looked very attractive to them. They could think of a dozen things to do with it. It would buy some furniture, which they needed for the house, or it would buy some fine clothes. So they held on to it for a time, and, meanwhile, each of them thought of some other uses for it. It was exciting to plan about it anyway. It afforded interesting pastime for idle hours. And after awhile it came to seem as if they could not give it up, not all of it, at any rate. Then it occurred to one of them, Why not hand over part of it next Sunday just as if it were the entire sum received for the sale of the property? The rest

they could keep to buy those things which they really should not be asked to do without.

The report had already been circulated that Ananias had made a good sale. Nobody knew the price obtained. So it would be easy to pass in the money as if it covered the entire sale. Neither of them would actually have to say a word about it. And yet they would have the full praise for doing a generous thing. Then the next day, when Ananias went to business, his friends would cross the street to shake him by the hand or slap him on the back and say, "I congratulate you, Ananias! So you've joined the ranks of large givers!" When Sapphira went marketing, friends would smile a little more cordially than usual, and perhaps one or two would be envious because they had not done likewise. So these two reasoned themselves into believing there was no drawback to their plan. Still they took every precaution that none should know what they were doing. They even eased their consciences by agreeing to make another gift, some day when they were more prosperous. All this time they did not actually look each other in the eye and after it was settled they tried to forget all about it.

So at the next church service, Ananias carried part of the money just as they had agreed. He marched in line with the rest, trying hard to cover his agitation. With a hand that acted guilty, he placed his offering on the table. Then Peter, who knew men so well and could read their very souls, looking steadily at Ananias, said in a loud voice, so that everyone could hear:

"Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to

the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." At this accusation, under the startled and horrified gaze of the people, Ananias grew suddenly faint and fell down dead.

Now the name Ananias meant "Jehovah is gracious." It was given to him by parents who had the fondest hopes for him; who tried to provide for him always the best influences. All his life he had been surrounded by people of the highest ideals. It seems that he must always have allowed himself to evade the truth, else his conscience would never have let him carry out this larger deceit.

Perhaps we ourselves hardly realize how easy it is to form a habit, nor by what gradual steps it is done. It is so easy to say things not quite true, because it is expected of us. Even the conventional expressions, "I have had the best time," or "This is the very prettiest Christmas present I received," may be partial untruths; yet in every case we could find something truthful and kind to say. If first we have a generous, broad-minded spirit, we can always find some hearty comment that does ring true. But if, for instance, we could not enjoy a certain entertainment, then why say, "Everything was perfect," and more than give a very cordial greeting to an acquaintance about whom we were ready to say very unpleasant things when he had passed?

If we indulge ourselves in the small untruths, which

are so common, if we even use a letter ending which is not literally true, we make falsifying just so much easier, when there is really something to be gained by it. Even though these conventional remarks are not always taken for the exact truth, and even though no one is actually deceived by words which are so commonly used, still we are wronging ourselves when we use them. We are blunting our consciences ever so little, and another time it will be easier to make a double explanation, one to conscience, and one to a doubting friend. I think we all have a very nice comfortable feeling, a feeling of perfect confidence, in the presence of a man who says just what he thinks, even though it is sometimes blunt. But this does not mean that anyone should tell all that he knows, at all times. To tell the whole of an unpleasant truth, just for the love of letting the cat out of the bag, may be a very cowardly thing to do. To tell a sensitive little girl, for no reason at all, that she is very ugly, would be cruel, even though it is the exact truth. It requires a very clear judgment to distinguish between a kind and an unkind truth, and to be careful not to inflict unnecessary pain.

We seldom realize in time, how much easier it is to act a lie than to tell one. Most of us have been trained to recoil at an actual word-of-mouth falsehood, but the great danger lies in letting things pass, which we know are not true, just silently passing over something good we hear, or even going a step further, and doing, on a small scale, what Ananias and Sapphira did; for example, pretending to give away our best marbles, when all the time we know we have those safely hidden

in another pocket. This is the spirit, which prompts us to say or do disloyal things behind a friend's back.

If Ananias and Sapphira had always been very careful about all these little things, the great big deception would have been impossible. They wanted to be well thought of in the community, they wanted praise and glory, but they were not willing to pay the price. So, instead of going down into history, famous, as Barnabas is, for giving money to the poor, these two names have come to stand for lying. Ananias is a synonym for a lying man.

About three hours after the death of her husband, Sapphira came into the church, knowing nothing about what had happened. It was a moment of intense excitement for the congregation. Every man was alert and in the hush which followed her entrance, Peter spoke out to her saying, "Sapphira, did your land sell for the sum which Ananias has placed on the table?" And she answered, "Yea, for so much." Ananias had to act a lie, while Sapphira expected to give only her silent consent. But whenever a lie is acted it must sooner or later be followed by a lie that is spoken. So Sapphira had to answer, "Yea, for so much." Then Peter said unto her: "How is it that ye have agreed together to try the Spirit of the Lord? behold the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out." Then Sapphira, too, fell down dead, and the same young men who had just carried out her husband, carried her out, too, and buried them together.

Ananias and Sapphira did not sin alone; they brought in their money in the presence of the whole

church. If this deceit had passed unnoticed, other men would soon have been telling lies. Whenever lying or love of money finds a bit of fertile ground in which to grow, it will soon spread like a weed, crowding out much that is good. The people in the Jewish community had been living together in love and peace. If deceit had crept in, it would have changed everything. Perhaps no one would have known just how it all happened, until finally they came to realize that instead of trusting everybody, as they once had done, they were constantly on the lookout for trickery. They would have become suspicious of everybody. No one would have been generous any more.

The death of Ananias and Sapphira was a warning to all. "Great fear came upon the whole church." It made them think more deeply, made them look at their own lives. It encouraged the worthy, and drove out the wicked. Hence the story of these two lives has been a lesson to all peoples in all times.

QUESTIONS

What was the custom of the early disciples in respect to their property?

Were they compelled to give away their property?

Were most of them honest?

Were all of them honest?

Can you name a man who told a lie?

Can you name a woman who told a lie?

What did they lie about?

What came to them as a result of their lying?

Is it ever right to lie?

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE LAND OF THE DRAGON-SLAYER

GEORGE is the name of a distinguished hero, commonly known as Saint George. If we were making a series of "little journeys" to the homes of great heroes, we should want to visit the place where this man lived; for he is known as the great dragon-slayer. Peter made a journey to his home; but Peter got there first. This chapter has something about Peter, the dragon-slayer, and a good woman.

St. George was a brave man, and so was Peter. Soon after Philip's preaching in Samaria, Peter went there on a visit, as we read in the last chapter, and a very important incident happened.

And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed unto them the Christ. And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did. For from many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed. And there was much joy in that city.

But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who

beforetime in the city used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed.

Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness

and in the bond of iniquity. And Simon answered and said, "Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me."

They, therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.—(Acts 8:5-25.)

It was not in Samaria that the dragon-slayer lived. That belongs to another of Peter's adventures. Once cowardly Peter had become a courageous man. He preached in Jerusalem and he journeyed up and down through near-by cities, always preaching and doing good. On one of these journeys through the plain of Sharon toward the great Sea he came to the town of Lydda. Lydda is an interesting old town, and still bears the ancient name of Ludd. All boys are interested in Lydda, for it was there that St. George is said to have lived. St. George lived in Lydda about three hundred years after Christ, and is said to have suffered martyrdom in 303. He became very famous as an officer under the Roman emperor Diocletian. It was he who was said to have killed the dragon. In the time of the Crusades, the English soldiers adopted him as their patron saint. The perpendicular red cross on the flag of England is the cross of St. George; and the gold coins of Great Britain bear a picture of him, mounted on a spirited horse, and killing a dragon with a spear.

Whether this really happened or not we need not consider; but it is a very old story which has interested the boys of England and other countries for many

hundreds of years. And Lydda was where this good and brave man lived; for we are sure that he was good and brave.

In Lydda, nearly three hundred years before St. George, lived a man named Aeneas. He had been sick for eight years; and Peter healed him. So the people of that city were very greatly interested in the story Peter had to tell them of Jesus.

It was while Peter was in Lydda that news came to him from Joppa, which is only a few miles away on the shore of the sea, that a good woman was sick, and the friends sent to Lydda for Peter.

This is the story of that event as the Bible tells it:

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, entreating him, Delay not to come on unto us. And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he

presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord. And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.—(Acts 9:36-43.)

THE GOOD DEEDS OF DORCAS.

We have only this little glimpse into the life of Dorcas. We read her past life in the grief for her death, in the lamentations of the poor, and in the sight of the garments she had made for them. But this

little glimpse, we may be sure, affords a true estimate of her character. It has made her name immortal, and has written it at the head of that long roll of Christian women whose deeds of Christian love have blessed the world. A thousand societies of good women, or perhaps ten thousand or more, have named themselves "Dorcas Societies," because they seek to do such work as she did.

As we read the book of Acts and the Epistles, we are impressed with the number of good women who are mentioned in the history of early Christianity.

There are those who accompanied Jesus in His journeys and "ministered to Him of their substance." Of such womanhood as this was written,

"Not she with traitorous kiss the Saviour stung;
Not she denied him with unholy tongue:
She, when apostles shrank, could danger brave,—
Last at the Cross and earliest at the grave."

As we read the story of Apostolic Christianity the number multiplies. We are to read of Lydia, whose gentle hand opened the door of Europe to the preaching of the Gospel; of Phoebe, who carried the message of Paul to Rome; of Priscilla and Aquila, who labored with Paul making tents, and who had a church in their house; and of a multitude of faithful women who labored with the men of brave hearts and planted the Gospel in the earth.

Let us call the roll of some of the noble women of the Bible, and remind ourselves who they were.

There are Rebecca, and Miriam, and Rahab, and Ruth and Hannah and Esther; there are the Queen

of Sheba and the Shunamite woman who is the only woman the Bible speaks of as "great," and Jael and Deborah—what a list they make of mighty womanhood.

There are Elizabeth the mother of John, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and Anna the prophetess, and the woman of Samaria, and the Bethany sisters, Mary and Martha, and the women at the Cross, and the women who told the story of the resurrection—and these are not all.

Let us thank God for brave men, and for true, good women. The world needs them both.

It was the hand of a good woman, Bertha, the wife of King Ethelbert, who opened the door of England to the Gospel in 597.

It was Bertha's daughter who, married to the king of Northumberland, Edwin, then the most powerful ruler in England, more than any other one person made the religion of Jesus the religion of the Anglo-Saxon world.

A thousand times in the history of the Christian Church, good women have performed deeds which men could not have done. And those who themselves did nothing which the world saw or knew, taught their children and grandchildren as Eunice and Lois taught Timothy; and so the work of the Lord went on. Let us thank God for all good women. And let us remember the fine old poem in the last chapter of the book of Proverbs:

A worthy woman who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.

The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
And he shall have no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her bread from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her household,
And their task to her maidens.
She considereth a field and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself carpets of tapestry;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them,
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;

And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying:
Many daughters have done worthily,
But thou excellest them all.
Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

We have need of brave men to fight the dragons of evil, as St. George is said to have done. And we need good women to do such deeds as Dorcas did.

QUESTIONS

Did you ever see a British gold sovereign?
What picture is on the back of it?
Who was St. George?
What is he said to have done?
Where did he live?
Who else went to this same city?
What did Peter do when he came to Lydda?
What other city is near Lydda?
What good woman lived there?
What happened to her?
Name some of the good women of whom the Bible tells us.

CHAPTER IX

PETER AND THE CAPTAIN

CAPTAINS in the Roman army are mentioned several times in the New Testament, and usually with honor. We are surprised to find how frequently these officers were good men. It would be interesting to look up the word "centurion" in the concordance, and see how many good centurions there were; and "centurion" means commander of a hundred men, or as we would say, a captain. This is the story of one of these captains.

Herod the Great built up, during his reign, a great city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, about fifty miles north of Jerusalem. First, he constructed an immense harbor, with breakwaters; then he made a city so fine and so large that he decided to call it Caesarea, in honor of the great emperor, Augustus Caesar. This city was the Roman capital of Judea. Here lived the governor in charge of the Roman soldiers. In fact, this city was headquarters for Roman troops in Judea. The many Roman officers lived in Caesarea. These men led a pleasant life, with plenty of money and leisure to use it, and just work and responsibility enough to keep them contented.

This story is about an officer named Cornelius, the commander of a century, a centurion so-called, because he was in charge of a company of a hundred men. It was his privilege to wear a splendid suit of chain armor, reaching from the shoulders to the knees. Because of his office, he was a man of some social position and rank. He was not only well up in the social scale, but he had a reputation for being generous and just to his servants. His inferiors were so loyal to him, that they took him as their example and worshipped according to the religion he taught them. He was a "devout man and one that feared God with all his house." His life was an example for the whole community. He was a man who did his duty manfully, gave generously to the poor, and "feared God." Yet Cornelius held his head high; he was proud of his rank, proud of his office, proud to be a Roman. If any one had told him, that he, the proud centurion, would send for a humble Jew, a Christian preacher of no especial rank, to come and visit him at his house, he would have denied it with an emphatic shake of his head, yet this strange thing did happen.

This is the way it came about. About three o'clock of an afternoon, Cornelius fell asleep and dreamed that an angel from heaven came to him and called him by name. At first he was startled, for the room was filled with a sudden light, and he cried out in terror, "What is it, Lord?" When the angel spoke, the voice soothed him, so that he was no longer afraid, but listened calmly.

And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being

affrighted, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side.—(Acts 10:4-6.)

THE ANGEL APPEARING TO CORNELIUS.

Cornelius had heard of Simon Peter: reports of him had gone as far as Caesarea. He knew vaguely that this man had worked miracles, had healed people, and taught them new lessons. But Peter was a man of humble station even among his own people. He was living in Joppa with a tanner, that despised tradesman of the lower classes. Yet Cornelius was

so awed by the wonder of his vision, that he followed the instructions without delay. He made no excuses, but decided at once to send two of his most faithful servants and a loyal soldier to bring Peter to Cæsarea.

While these three men are making their journey, we will have to go ahead of them to Joppa to find out something more about Peter. Another chapter tells how Peter healed a leper in Lydda. Then he went to Joppa. Almost the first thing he did here was to restore Tabitha to life. Of course he was well known in Joppa, for his miracles had been talked about, and he was known, too, in many cities outside of Joppa.

On this day, when the strangers from Cæsarea were coming to see him, about twelve o'clock Peter went up to the roof of his house, for the Jewish hour of prayer. With Jews a housetop was as popular as a living room is with us; and perhaps they had even greater pleasure out of it. Their roofs were flat, or slightly raised in the center to let the water run off. They were surrounded by a balustrade, sometimes three or four feet high, so that no one from the street could see what was going on above. Each roof had for convenience two exits, one stairway into the house, another leading directly into the street. The roof was a very important part of the house, for it was large enough to permit of all sorts of activities. Fruits and corn could be dried here, clothes hung out, exercises taken, or games played. It was a fine place to entertain afternoon guests, and an excellent outdoor sleeping room for summer, high enough to be

out of the reach of insects. Orthodox Jews also retired to the roof three times a day for prayer and meditation.

On this day, Peter lingered a while on the roof after the time of prayer. It was the dinner hour, but dinner was late that day, and while he waited, he fell into a kind of trance.

And he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth: wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord: for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean.—(Acts 10:11-14.)

To understand Peter's answer, we must know that the Jews were called Basket-carriers, for the reason that a Jew, when traveling, slung a basket over his shoulder, in which to carry the food for his journey. There were some kinds of food he could never touch, he called them unclean, because they were forbidden by the Jewish law, so he carried his food with him, lest he should have to eat what was forbidden. Shakespeare has the Jew, Shylock, say to Bassanio: "I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you." A strict Jew today will not use ordinary soap because the fat of pigs has been used in making it.

While Peter sat there thinking over the vision, "much perplexed in himself what the vision he had

seen might mean," a new idea came to him. He saw it only dimly, he could not follow it out nor put it into action. He was quite bewildered, but as he sat there, he heard voices below, and he knew that three men were asking for him. They were the servants of Cornelius, the Gentile, coming to ask him to visit their master. This call gave him a chance to put into action, the idea which he had. He saw that the un-

PETER PRAYING ON THE HOUSETOP

clean animals in the sheet stood for the Gentiles, a race despised by the Jews. He saw that God wished him to do for the Gentiles the same things he had been doing for the Jews. The distinction between Jew and Gentile, at this time, was stronger even, than the caste system of India. A Jew was defiled for life if he ate with a Gentile. Peter might preach to the Gentiles, but his friends recoiled in horror at the thought of his entering a Gentile's house, or of his eating with them.

Peter pondered his vision and came to see that Christ taught the equality of all men; that repentance, baptism, and salvation, were intended as much for the Gentile as for the Jew. While he was plodding over the dusty roads to reach Cornelius, he weighed all these things, and when he arrived at Cæsarea, he was ready to go into the house of Cornelius, and eat with him. This was the greatest step that had yet been taken, in breaking down the prejudice between Jew and Gentile. For Peter stayed with Cornelius several days, to teach him and his friends of the life of Christ.

QUESTIONS

Of what Captain does this chapter tell us?
What kind of a man was he?
What vision did he see?
What message did he send?
Where was Peter at this time?
What was Peter doing?
What vision did he see?
How did these two men come together?
How did they act toward each other?
What great lesson did Peter learn from this experience?

CHAPTER X

THE YOUNG MAN SAUL

THE day when we were present at the stoning of Stephen, one face was pointed out that afterwards came back to us in memory. It was no common face, and we were not able to forget it. It was the face of a young man, and we heard, in passing, his name. He was guarding the clothes of the men who threw the stones. They, in their mad fury, threw off their loose outer garments, and Saul stood guard over the pile. He was almost sorry to have to do this, as it prevented his throwing any of the stones.

Were this the only occasion in which reference is made to Saul, we should give the man and his personality little thought; our interest centers upon the martyr, Stephen, whose prayer for his murderers was so like to that of the dying Saviour. But already we know that this same Saul is to appear again before our vision as the story proceeds; and we cannot refrain from considering at the outset the man of whom we are to learn so much. Even in this first meeting he divides our interest with Stephen; a little later he becomes the most interesting of all characters on the stage of the early Church. It is almost im-

possible to speak in terms too pronounced of his importance to Christianity. Some scholars have called him the real founder of Christianity. This is extravagant and untrue. The founder of Christianity and of the Church was Jesus Himself; but next to Jesus no one man sustains so important a relation to early Christianity as he whom we first meet at the stoning of Stephen, the young man Saul.

If we put together the fragmentary bits of information concerning Saul at this time, and add his own sorrowful and penitent recollections in later days, we see in him a most bitter and relentless persecutor. It seems somewhat probable that he was a member of the Sanhedrin, and there gave his vote against more than one follower of Christ. Whether he was a member of this body or not, he occupied, for so young a man, a most prominent position among the persecutors. His age we do not know. When we first meet him he is a "young man whose name was Saul." When we meet him last he is "Paul the aged." He can hardly have been under thirty at this time, and cannot well have been many years older. All the impetuosity of his youth was devoted to the defence of the ancient Jewish traditions. He was "exceedingly mad" against the Christians. He "persecuted them to strange cities." He "compelled them to blaspheme in every synagogue." He "made havoc of the Church." And this is the man who later was to take up the work of Stephen whom he helped to stone.

Saul is still young when first we meet him, and the memories of his youth lie not far behind. From certain scattered and fragmentary statements we

know that Saul was born in Tarsus; that he was of the tribe of Benjamin; that his training was that of a rigid Pharisee; and that he had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the great Jewish teacher, in Jerusalem. Jerome records a tradition that Saul was born in

THE YOUNG MAN SAUL

Giscala, of Galilee, but this is not to be credited against Paul's own statement that he was born in Tarsus. But the tradition may indicate the origin of his family. From Palestine, and quite possibly from Giscala, Saul's father had gone; and unlike many Jews born out of Palestine, who sometimes were of

Greek parentage and training, Saul was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews." But he was also a Roman citizen, "born free," and proud of his heritage.

The city of Paul's birth still exists. It is now a poor town, mostly Christian, and has a college founded by the American Board and known as St. Paul's Institute. The locality can never have been free from climatic disadvantages. The atmosphere is oppressive, and the river breeds malaria. But in olden time the Cnidus was not the swampy stream which now appears. It ran through the middle of the city, and broadened below into a lake, from whence it made its way to the sea, a distance from the city of not more than ten miles. Up this stream to the chief city of Cilicia swept the fleets of the ancient world. The royal barge of Cleopatra even ascended from the Mediterranean to the capital, then noted for its commerce and learning, but now of interest as the birthplace of Saul of Tarsus.

Tarsus in Saul's day was one of the chief cities of the Mediterranean, and the metropolis of Cilicia. It was the seat of a great university, and the home of commerce and of wealth. It was cosmopolitan in its culture, and offered many advantages to a lad born within its borders. Saul later spoke of it as "no mean city," and his boast was justified by the facts.

The training which Saul received in Tarsus had its influence on the subsequent life of Paul, the missionary. The contrast was great between him and the other apostles. They were from the country; he, from the city. They knew more of nature; he, more of men. He was at home among men of many classes,

but of the beauties of nature he had hardly any perception. Few writers have been so little influenced by the observation of nature as Paul. Largely this was the result of his temperament; partly, no doubt, it was due to his training. He was a man not of the fields, but of the crowded thoroughfares, the marts and the schools which belonged to the cities of his time.

Saul appears not to have been a strong boy. But he was an admirer of athletic sports, and must have had a great deal of energy to have accomplished what he did. He certainly was not an invalid, or he could never have endured the long journeys which later he was constantly making.

When he was a boy, he learned a trade—that of tent-making. He sewed the rough canvas which was used in the tents of the shepherds and travelers. It was fortunate that he knew how to do this; for he was able to make his living in this fashion, and to give more time to his work in the ministry than he could otherwise have done. We are sorry that he had to use any of his frail strength in this way, but we are sure that his parents were wise in teaching him a trade. The Jews had a proverb, "The man who does not teach his son a trade, teaches him to steal."

After he had attended the synagogue school in Tarsus, he was sent to Jerusalem. There he completed the course of study in the schools of the Jewish law, and studied under the greatest Jewish teacher of his time, Gamaliel. Saul was an apt student, and became a very zealous Pharisee.

Stephen was one of the seven deacons, men chosen for well-known honesty and business ability, to have

charge of the temporal affairs of the Jerusalem church. As the complaint had been that the Hellenists, or Christians of other than Jewish birth, were neglected in the distribution of alms, the Hellenists were doubtless represented among the deacons. The name and the work of Stephen indicate that he was one of these Hellenists, appointed originally because the Greek converts had faith in him. How little Saul understood that he himself was in training as a successor to Stephen, at whose stoning he assisted!

These Hellenists, to whom Stephen ministered, were not Gentiles in the ordinary sense of the word; for though they had been born of other than Jewish parents, they had been converted to the faith of the Jews before they had become Christians. But they were a neglected class, and the most nearly Gentile of any class in Jerusalem to whom the Gospel came at the outset.

It happened in a very wonderful way that the man who had undertaken to work for these poor people, and who was stoned to death in Jerusalem, was succeeded in that work by a man who did it in a very much larger way. And who do you suppose was that other man, who followed Stephen, and became a minister to the Gentiles? Possibly you know who he was. But if you do not, then the chapters that follow will tell you. And it is a strange and very interesting story.

QUESTIONS

Where do we first meet Saul?
What do we know about him?

Where was he born?
Where did he spend his youth?
Where did he go to school?
Who was his teacher?
What was his spirit?
How did he treat the Christians?
What trade did he learn?
How much do we know about his after life?
Would you like to know what happened afterward?

CHAPTER XI

HOW SAUL CHANGED HIS PLAN

WE WERE interested in Saul, a young man whom we noticed standing beside the pile of clothes of the men who stoned Stephen. His face impressed us, and we wondered if we should ever see him again. We meet him soon, and in a very strange way. We are to become well acquainted with him.

One day a company went out of the north gate at Jerusalem, and passed very near to the place where Stephen was stoned. They journeyed northward, and a little east, through the borders of Samaria, and around the Sea of Galilee, and among the foothills of the high mountains in the north of Palestine, and across the desert toward Damascus. They camped four or five nights on the way, and were on their last day's ride. It was a hot day, near noon, and they were thinking it was nearly time to stop for lunch, but the leader was eager to get as far ahead as possible. Suddenly, as they rode on, they saw a great light.

And there was a noise, which no one understood except one man, and he heard a voice. It did not last very long; but when the men looked about, every one's face was pale with fear and wonder, and the leader

had fallen from his horse, and was crying out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

It was all very strange, and at first the men could not understand it.

Who was this man who fell from his horse near Damascus? It was the young man, Saul.

He had grown more and more bitter against the Christians, till he determined, if possible, to kill them all. He went to the high priest, and told him that he had heard there were Christians in other cities besides Jerusalem. And the high priest issued a warrant, and gave it to Saul, and told him he might go to Damascus, and arrest all the Christians he could find.

In and about Jerusalem Saul's occupation of heresy-hunting was gone. The disciples were scattered abroad. Those that remained met secretly, and some renounced their faith. But those who were scattered still believed. When we read about the preaching of Philip, and afterward of Peter, we see how widely the Christians were scattered. But although this hot-headed, young persecutor had accomplished so much, he was still breathing out threatenings and slaughter.

It may be that some of those whom he had persecuted had fled to Damascus, and there had gathered an increasing company of believers. Saul was indignant to learn that even there, a hundred and fifty miles away, men should worship Jesus. So he obtained letters from the high priest at Jerusalem, giving him authority to arrest any of the Christians whom he might find and bring them bound to Jerusalem.

But between Jerusalem and Damascus there is a

week's journey. Saul had more time than usual to think over his conduct. He had been telling himself that he was acting in good conscience. Now, almost for the first time since he had begun this bloody work, conscience had a chance to be heard. We know from Paul's own reference that the death of Stephen remained a vivid memory with him. He had time now to recall that face which all had once beheld as the face of an angel, and those words, so Christ-like, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." It had been comparatively easy to assume that killing Stephen and seeking to kill others like-minded was not a sin, but a virtue, yet now Saul found himself unable to think about it with comfort. From thinking of the death of the martyrs, he may well have thought of the death of Christ, of which he had not indeed been a witness, but of which he had heard, and which was the more vivid because he had seen it repeated in the death of those who died for him.

As he pondered such things by the way, suddenly, at midday, there came a light and a voice. The whole retinue saw the light, and heard the voice, but the words were for Saul alone. What a light it must have been to outshine the Syrian sun at midday! He was now near Damascus. He had had a week of conflict of soul. It had been hard for him to kick against the goads, but he had done it. He had gone on in a spirit that would have ridden rough-shod over his growing conviction. In spite of his argument he knew that he was acting the part of a persecutor. Still he would have gone on but for the voice and the vision. We are not told the whole story of the struggle, and

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THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

we do not know how great had been his resistance of the Spirit of God, but that he had resisted, and sinfully, is evident from the way in which the Lord addressed him. In the vision that blinded his eyes to all else, he saw one thing only, and that was the risen Christ. In what form Jesus appeared, or how He manifested Himself to Saul, we are given no definite word, but one thing Saul knew with a certainty, he had seen the Lord. Henceforth woe was him if he preached not the Gospel. All the sufferings of Stephen and of the noble army of martyrs were seen by him as heaped upon Jesus, whom he had persecuted, and from that time he knew nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

We have three accounts of the conversion of Saul. Of no other event, save only the death and resurrection of Jesus, have we so many and so full versions. One single miracle, that of the feeding of the five thousand, is related by all four of the evangelists, but the different accounts do not so richly supplement each other as do those of the conversion of Saul. Paul himself twice relates the circumstances connected with his conversion, and often alludes more or less directly to it. He knew the call of Jesus was a special call to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Such repetition and variation and richness of detail well indicate the importance of the event as it appeared at the time. And we know that it was one of the most important events in the early history of the Church.

Not all the light came to Saul at once. He was led into the city of Damascus, and there waited in darkness and humility until a man named Ananias came

and found him praying. This Ananias was a very different man from the untruthful man of the same name; and when he came and found Saul on his knees, he addressed to him the first cheering words which the penitent Saul had heard, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight."

The man who had been in darkness for three days suddenly found his sight returning. He rose and greeted Ananias, and knew in his soul that his prayers for light had been answered in the coming of this man.

Yet this was one of the men whom Saul would have taken back to Jerusalem in chains! How his heart must have rebuked him, as he and Ananias talked together, and the truth came home to him!

Saul had much to learn. Not in an instant did he attain full knowledge of the work that lay before him. "I will tell him how great things he must suffer," had been the promise of Jesus. And Saul had much to learn of the meaning of this in the long years that followed. But the change had come. The persecutor was ready now to endure persecution for the cause of Christ. The most ardent enemy of the Gospel had become its foremost defender. Saul was a changed man; and his change made many changes in the lives of others then and afterward.

With the conversion of Saul begins a new era in the history of the church. The Gospel, as preached by the original apostles, was the Gospel of a risen Christ who was to come again in power and great glory, and was effective in converting men to Him. But as yet Christianity in its outward manifestation was but a Jewish sect of Judaism; and after the death

of Stephen there was little evidence that it would grow to more than this. The apostles worshiped in the temple, and observed all the ordinances of the law.

"Brother Saul, Receive Thy Sight"

They regarded themselves as Jews, and made no provision in their preaching for the salvation of other men. Peter's vision was not lost upon him, but it had little influence upon the Church at large, and even

Peter sometimes failed to live squarely up to its teaching. We do not know what would have happened if God had done otherwise, but we are safe in tracing actual developments to their historic source, and we know that to the convert Saul, and not to the original twelve apostles, we must trace the interpretation of the message of the Gospel for all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. Without that interpretation it is hard to see how the Gospel itself could have survived in the world, or, surviving, how it could now be a matter of more than local or racial interest.

From the many lessons which suggest themselves we may be content to select a few. First of all, we may remember that not all men are converted in the same way. Saul's conversion is the most striking one recorded in the Bible, but in many of its characteristics it is exceptional. Not many men have Saul's past record. Not many men hear his wonderful call. But all men have a record of shameful neglect of duty, and of unwillingness to obey the truth which they know. All men can remember, if they will, their wilful ignorance of the larger truth, and how they have been led into what they vainly try to persuade themselves is a conscientious life, but which they know in their hours of quiet thought is a life of sin. And all men have a call, and may have a vision of the Christ whom they are persecuting. But he who hears the voice of Jesus saying, "Follow me," and leaves all and follows Him, is just as good a Christian, or better. He who in youth hears the voice of God and obeys God as naturally as he obeys his father, is as truly converted as was Saul, and as really born again as if

he could tell the time and place where first the vision appeared to him. God has not cast all human life in one mold, nor limited himself in the diversity of His operations. Every one that loveth is born of God, and every regeneration is normal. No man who has within himself the witness and whose life bears witness to his regeneration need doubt it because it is not like that of Saul.

Again, it need not surprise us if we do not at once leap into the full meaning of our Christian life. We must grow. Christians do not spring into their full strength like Minerva from the head of Jove. In the Christian life there are the blade, the ear, and the full corn. Sometimes there is the period of darkness while the seed is breaking into life before even the blade appears, in which there is sometimes apparent room to question whether any grace has been wrought or is to be. Saul's three days of darkness are shorter than many men have known. And sometimes when God says, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do," the new Christian has to look the city through before he finds Ananias. Paul later had another vision of a man to whom he was to go, a man of Macedonia, and when he arrived at the city where he expected to find the man, he looked for him without avail, and found him at length in jail. Not a few young Christians are discouraged because with the first step into the kingdom there is not an increased radiance which lights the whole life path. Instead, there is sometimes a period of darkness, from the very excess of previous light. In such a case, there is nothing so good as to obey the first command of God, and

rise and go straight ahead and do the duties that present themselves and wait for the light to come.

Finally, it is a lesson worth learning which Horace Bushnell taught, that every man's life is a plan of God. The work which God gave the new convert to do was a continuation and enlargement of that of Stephen, the first preacher of the world-wide Gospel. God does a great thing when He hangs Haman on his own gallows, but a greater one when He turns the life of the persecutor into a glorious enlargement upon the life which he has thwarted. Saul took up the very work he had brought to an untimely close. Had Stephen lived he could never have done the work of Paul. Had he not died, we might not have had Paul. Thus God makes even the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder thereof he restrains.

The truth which seemed to die in Stephen rose from the dead glorified in the teaching of Paul. He is the great theologian of the New Testament, and his thoughts have inspired the system of Christian theology.

To every man comes a vision of God and duty. To all who have known Him comes a vision of the risen Christ who is presecuted when we sin. Let our prayer be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And it shall be shown us.

QUESTIONS

Who led a company out of Jerusalem?
Where were they going?
For what purpose were they going?
How long were they on the way?

What happened on this journey?

What did Saul see?

What did he hear?

What did he answer?

To whom did he go?

How many accounts have we of the conversion of Saul?

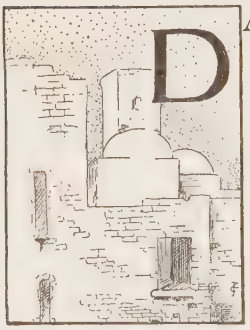
How long was he in darkness?

Are all men converted in the same way?

May we have visions of duty?

CHAPTER XII

OVER THE WALL IN A BASKET



DAMASCUS is the city to which Saul went after his conversion. If we depended entirely upon the Book of Acts for our knowledge of the history of Saul, we might suppose that he began preaching at once. But his letter to the Galatians tells us that after he had gone into the city, and had met Ananias, and had received his sight, he went into Arabia. There he stayed three years.

Arabia is so large a country, we could hardly feel sure what he meant by this term, if we did not know what part of Arabia the people of Jerusalem were accustomed to think of when they spoke the name. When they spoke of Arabia, they commonly meant the region about Mount Sinai, where the children of Israel had journeyed. Paul speaks of this mountain as if he had seen it; and he may for a time have lived under its shadow in the wilderness.

We do not know how long he lived in Arabia, but it is probable that he spent nearly three years there. He cannot have remained very long in Damascus after his conversion before he went into Arabia. Probably he stayed only a few days, receiving instruction

from Ananias and the other brethren in that city, and then quietly withdrew. He was not ready yet to preach, and his future was yet to be revealed to him. So he went to Arabia, and the time he spent there was not wasted. Boys and girls sometimes think of school time as waste and drudgery, but it is not so. Young men eager to enter the ministry sometimes are tempted to neglect the years of preparation, but this is a mistake. Saul spent three years in Arabia and Damascus, and probably most of it in Arabia, before he began his larger ministry.

What Saul did while he was in Arabia we do not know. Very likely he made tents, as he knew how to do, and supported himself in this fashion. The people in that part of Arabia live in tents, and he could easily make his living in that way. This would bring him into contact with passing caravans, and give him opportunity to learn what was going on in the world. Now and then he would meet a traveller who would tell him of the spread of the Gospel into Egypt. Occasionally he would meet a fugitive fleeing from persecution in Jerusalem, and would remember with shame how he himself had begun that bitter, cruel persecution.

When he met Christians, as now and then he must have done, how eagerly he must have asked them about Jesus. Saul had never seen Jesus, and now that he was a Christian, he must have been very desirous of knowing more about Him. Occasionally he may have met some one who could tell him about the Saviour of men. And we are sure he improved all such opportunities.

It may have been while he was in Arabia, under the shadow of Mount Sinai, that he thought out that allegory between the old and new covenants which he later wrote out in his letter to the Galatians. He was writing about the difference between the law and grace.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. Which things contain an allegory; for these women are two covenants; one from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother. For it is written,

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not;
Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not:
For more are the children of the desolate than of her
that hath the husband.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also it is now. Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman. (Galatians 4:21-31.)

It came to seem clear to him that law alone would not save men; that there must be love as well. And as he thought it over, it grew plain that love had been before law, and was the reason for law; that law alone was bondage. He looked up at the mountain that had thundered, when the law was given, and he may have thought some such words as are written in the epistle to the Hebrews:

For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that no word more should be spoken unto them; for they could not endure that which was enjoined. If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel.—(Hebrews 12:18-24.)

Saul may have been restless sometimes in Arabia. He was not such a man as takes kindly to inactivity. For him the world of thought and activity were one world; and his restless soul was ill content with whatever compelled him to wait. We are sure he was not idle; but what he did we do not know. He tells us

himself that it was three years after he left Jerusalem on his way to Damascus before he returned to the Holy City again, and that, after his conversion, and the visit to Damascus, he went into Arabia. And we know that he returned to Jerusalem by way of Damascus, so we are sure of the places he visited, and the time which was occupied before he entered upon what became his life work. But how much time he spent in Damascus at the beginning, and how much at the end, we cannot tell. We judge that both visits were short, and that nearly all the interval of three years was spent among the valleys of Mount Sinai, where the Law of Moses had been given, and where he began to learn new lessons of the relations of law and grace. Living, perhaps, in a tent of his own making, and sewing the rough cloth for tents which he sold to shepherds and merchants, Saul thought and talked and asked questions and meditated, and waited for the time when God was to reveal His greater work.

It may be that at this time he had no other thought than that he should continue to live in Arabia and make tents. Christians were scattering from Jerusalem; he knew it was unsafe to return there. So he did his daily work in patience, and learned the lessons which he needed to learn. Saul was an impatient man by nature, and these three years must have taught him many lessons of patience. In some respects they were like years of school life for us.

But the time came for Saul to leave Arabia. We do not know what caused him to make the change, but, in some way, he felt sure that he ought to return to Damascus. So he joined a caravan, and journeyed

northward through the wilderness to Damascus. He doubtless kept well to the east of the Jordan, but the last day's journey may have taken him over the very road by which he entered Damascus when he was converted. What thoughts must have overwhelmed him as he passed the spot where he saw the light and heard the voice of Jesus, rebuking him for his wicked obstinacy and hardness of heart.

When he re-entered Damascus he began to preach.

And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests. But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him: but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him: but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.—(Acts 9:20-25.)

This is the story of Saul's first preaching. It roused wonder and opposition. Everyone was surprised to hear that so violent a persecutor had become a convert; and when they listened to the earnest words of the new disciple their wonder grew. But their hatred grew also, and they determined to kill him. For a time he hid within the city; and then, as his enemies

were certain that he would try to escape, and watched every gate, night and day, his friends finally had to help him out of the city in the following strange manner.

Houses are often built upon the walls of old-time cities, and some of them have projecting windows. From one of these they let him down with ropes, and watched with eager concern lest the watchman or some enemy discover and betray him. But no one was passing at the moment, so Saul escaped in safety, and stole away in the darkness.

Before very long Saul found his way round to the Jerusalem road, and made as much of the journey as he was able before morning. He hurried as fast as he could, to get as far as possible from Damascus. And as he ran along the road in the moonlight, or hid in the dark from some passer-by, he must have remembered very often how differently he came to Damascus. Then he rode, and was attended by a guard. Now he was alone, and fleeing in the darkness. Where now was his pride, his glory? He was a fugitive, a wanderer.

And who would welcome him when he arrived in Jerusalem? Not the chief priest. Not the scribes. Not his old teacher, Gamaliel. None of those who loved him and trusted him would welcome him now. But Saul felt sure of one thing. The Christians would welcome him. And he would go to them at once, tell them his story, and be their leader. He thought of himself as standing in the temple and preaching to the Jews, and giving courage and faith to the disciples. How glad they would be to see

him! How eagerly they would proclaim him their leader!

So Saul made his journey back to Jerusalem over the same road he had traveled when he went out to arrest the Christians. After a weary journey of a week, he came in sight of Jerusalem again. If he entered by the Damascus gate, he passed by Calvary, where Jesus had been crucified, and not far from the spot where Stephen had been stoned. What emotions must have thrilled him as he returned to Jerusalem!

But one thing he felt certain about. His career as a wanderer was over. There was no more hiding for him. He proposed to go into the temple and teach there, and make Jerusalem the place of his life work. How little he knew what was before him!

QUESTIONS

Where did Paul go from Damascus?

What do you know about Arabia?

How long was Paul there?

How did he leave Damascus?

What mountain is in Arabia?

To what person did Paul compare this mountain?

What contrast did he draw between the law and the Gospel?

Between Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion?

What do you know about Paul's first preaching?

CHAPTER XIII

THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED PAUL

CAN you imagine the feelings of Saul when he returned to Jerusalem for the first time after his conversion? He had high hopes of leadership in a cause which he had once so vehemently opposed, but there was in store for him a bitter disappointment. He arrived in the city and sought out the Christians, but none of them believed in him. They had heard nothing about his conversion, but all knew the history of his persecutions, so, though he told his story to some of them, they refused to believe him. This must have been the bitterest drop in his cup, for the hope of the welcome he was to receive from the Christians had cheered him all along his weary and unhappy journey. But we are told distinctly that when Saul was come to Jerusalem he essayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple. We may be sure that he did not give up with a single trial. He did his very best to make them understand, but they had been hunted down and imprisoned and betrayed, and they did not dare to trust him. So Saul at length himself knew the bitterness of all that he

had inflicted upon others in his bigotry and stubbornness.

One day he went to the temple and there poured out his heart in prayer. He fell into some kind of a trance, or dream, and told about it long years afterward.

And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles.—(Acts 22:17-21.)

This incident which Saul recalled many years afterward, shows to us his state of mind. He had returned to Jerusalem really believing that he had a great mission in that city, but the Lord revealed to him that one who had been so notable a persecutor would not be trusted by those whom he had hunted to the death, so, very reluctantly and against all his ambitions and desires, Saul went out from the city where he had once studied and later expected to spend his life. All the hopes which were his when he left Arabia and went to Damscus had been disappointed there; all the hopes which he had cherished when he left Damascus and went to Jerusalem were disappointed now.

There are three accounts of Saul's first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. Perhaps you would like to look them up and read them all. One we have already quoted; another is found in the Book of Acts.

And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews; but they were seeking to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.—(Acts 9: 26-30.)

The third account is as follows:

Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother. Now, touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa which were in Christ: but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of

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BARNABAS INTRODUCING PAUL TO THE DISCIPLES.

which he once made havoc; and they glorified God in me.—(Galatians 1:17-24.)

Now, when we put these three accounts together, we read a record of heart-breaking disappointment. Saul really argued with the Lord when the Lord told him that he could not stay and teach in Jerusalem. Saul had been perfectly sure that this was the place for him to work. People sometimes had hated Saul, but always he had been believed sincere; and now to find himself suspected of laying a trap to betray the Christians was a bitter humiliation such as he had never known. In perfect amazement he concealed himself in some corner of Jerusalem and waited for further light.

It is experiences such as this that test the faith of young converts. Many a young Christian has given up his faith under a strain much less than this. Saul might easily have said, "They do not believe in me; I will have nothing to do with them." But this he could not say. Whether they believed in him or not, he believed in Christ. Somehow, somewhere, he must be a messenger for Jesus.

Now, just at this time, one man had faith in Saul. His name was Joseph, and he had another name, which the disciples gave to him. Joseph was a common name, but none among them had this other name, and so gradually the name Joseph dropped out of sight and the disciples called this man Barnabas, which means "the Son of Consolation." Barnabas was a Levite and his home was on the island of Cyprus. His temple duties brought him to Jerusalem

and he probably studied there. It is not at all unlikely that he and Saul had been schoolmates together and there is an old tradition which tells us that they were old-time friends. Barnabas heard that Saul was back in Jerusalem and he went to hunt him up. We do not know whether he had heard before that this hot-headed young Pharisee-friend of his had been converted. It is possible that, as the other disciples in Jerusalem had not learned about it, Barnabas heard it first from Saul's own lips. How he must have rejoiced to know that so brilliant and ardent a man had become a Christian, and how he must have sympathized with Saul when Saul told him that no one believed in him!

There are times when one man's faith in another can save a life from despair. There was nothing Saul needed so much as some one to believe in him; and Barnabas believed in Saul.

Barnabas took Saul to the other disciples; he introduced him to Peter and James. Peter took Saul to his home and kept him there two weeks, but Saul did not meet very many of the Christians. Peter and James were the only prominent ones. The rest were probably out of the city, scattered by the very persecutions which Saul had begun. While Peter took Saul to some of the meetings of the Christians, they were too much afraid of him still to give him any freedom of work in their city. He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, but the Jews were so hostile and the Christians were so fearful that it soon became evident that he must leave Jerusalem. They hurried Saul out of the city by night, much as they

had hurried him out of Damascus, but now he was not quite alone. A few of them went with him to Cæsarea and got him on board a boat and sent him back to his old home in Tarsus.

Saul had left his home in Tarsus, a bright, promising lad, and he had gone to study in Jerusalem. From time to time word had come back to his home of the progress he was making and of his prominence in the great city to which he had gone, but he came back now a fugitive, persecuted and forsaken even by the greater number of his new friends.

For four or five years we hear nothing more, directly, of this young convert. He appears to have preached more or less in Cilicia and now and then rumors reached the brethren in Jerusalem that "he that persecuted us now preaches the faith of which he once made havoc," but it was only a rumor. Only Peter and James were really acquainted with him, and as for the rest, his name was remembered as one of the murderers of Stephen, but now said to have been converted and to be doing Christian work in some obscure place or way. Most of this period of four or five years Saul probably spent in his old home in Tarsus. His work can hardly have been that of a scribe. Probably he supported himself by making tents, and now and then, as he had opportunity, he told the story of how he had seen the Lord and heard His voice.

But one day another boat sailed from the Eastern end of the Mediterranean and landed another passenger for Tarsus, and that passenger was no other than Barnabas. As soon as he arrived in Tarsus, he in-

quired for the home of Saul. How the old friends must have enjoyed meeting after this interval of four or five years! How much they had to tell each other which each one cared to hear! Barnabas must have been wonderfully interested in hearing about Saul's

Barnabas and Saul Meeting at Tarsus

preaching in Cilicia, but Saul was even more interested in hearing what Barnabas had to say to him, for Barnabas had been living in the wonderful city of Antioch and a great church had grown up in that city, and he came to ask Saul to come and live there and teach the people in Antioch. So Saul left his

tent-making in Tarsus and the two old friends set off together for the great work in Antioch.

We are to hear so much about Saul that we shall almost forget Barnabas, so let us remind ourselves at this time how good and true and faithful a man he was. He came to the church at Jerusalem at a time when they needed three things: courage, counsel and cash, and he brought them all, for he sold his possessions and laid the money at the apostles' feet and he went about doing so much good that in love for him they gave him the name by which we know him. But the thing which we have most of all to thank Barnabas for is that twice, and on very important occasions, he discovered a man greater than himself. But for the friendly interest and faith and good sense of this man Barnabas, we might never have heard of the great apostle Paul.

The world is always interested in discoverers, and has large rewards for them. The man who discovers a new method of saving labor is properly rewarded by his fellow men. The man who discovers a new kind of food is a benefactor, and his is the old-time blessing upon the man who makes two blades of grass to grow where formerly there was but one. The man who discovers a star or comet has a bright spot named for him in the heavens above, and recorded in learned volumes of astronomy. And even the man who discovers so useless a thing as the North Pole does not wholly fail of honor.

But greatest of discoverers is he who discovers a man; and well to the front among such discoverers is Barnabas.

What is more, he discovered a boy, and helped make a man of him; but that is another story. Later we shall read about a boy who started and failed, and only one man had faith in him; and we shall read about that faith and who the boy was, and what came of it. And when we know that story, we shall honor Barnabas all the more.

QUESTIONS

In what state of mind did Paul return to Jerusalem?
What was he expecting?
How many accounts have we of this visit?
Did the disciples welcome him?
Why not?
Why were they afraid of him?
Who had faith in Saul?
What was this man's other name?
What does his name mean?
What did he do for Saul?
Where did Saul go from Jerusalem?
Who went after him there?
Who receives honor as a great discoverer?

CHAPTER XIV

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

NORTH of Jerusalem three hundred miles was a very interesting city named Antioch. It was comparatively a new city, and it grew to be as large as Cincinnati. There were only two cities larger at that time; one of them was Rome and the other was Alexandria. A number of the disciples fleeing from Jerusalem may have gathered there; but we do not know their names. In some unknown way a church was formed in Antioch, and it grew to be very large, the largest and most important in the world at that time. And this happened before any of the apostles had visited there. So the apostles who were living in Jerusalem were greatly surprised to hear how great a church had grown up in Antioch. And they sent Barnabas to find out about it. Barnabas discovered that the people who first preached in Antioch had not come from Jerusalem, but from the island of Cyprus, and from Cyrene. They had gathered into the church not only Jews and proselytes, but Gentiles who had never been Jews.

Now we must remember that from the beginning,

Christianity had ministered to others than Jews. Jesus preached to the woman of Samaria, and healed the daughter of the woman of Canaan, and told the story of the Good Samaritan. And the early disciples, beginning with Stephen, had preached to those who had not been born Jews. Peter had been the guest of Simon, a tanner, who was probably a Jewish proselyte, and had preached to Cornelius, a Roman, and had baptized him. But the converts thus far had all come into Christianity through the Jewish gate; that is, they had accepted as a vital part of their faith the ceremonies of Judaism.

It was not so in Antioch. There the Gentiles became Christians without any thought of also becoming Jews. They were Christians, and nothing else: whereas, previously, all Christians had been either Jews or Jewish proselytes.

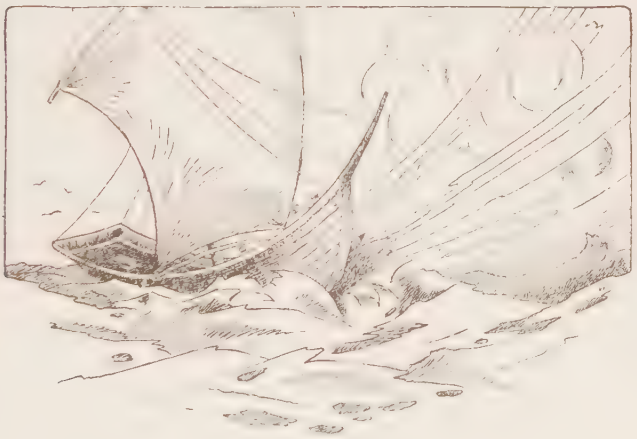
It was in Antioch that the disciples first had a name. In Jerusalem they had never thought they needed a name. They were simply those of the Jews who loved Jesus. But in Antioch they were first named Christians. And that is the name by which they are known to this day. It was not in Jerusalem that this name was given, but in Antioch.

Shakespeare asks, "What's in a name?" A great deal is in a name. One of the most important things that ever happened was the finding of a name for the body of believers in Jesus. And that name, most beautifully chosen, was the name Christians.

But who was to minister to this great new church with its new name? No one in Jerusalem could do it as it ought to be done; for the minister of that kind

of a church must be able to rise above all Jewish prejudice and enter heartily into the life of the people, both Jew and Gentile.

The people in Antioch asked Barnabas if he did not know some one who could come to them and be their minister; and he told them he believed he knew the very man they ought to have. And the more he told about Saul, the more they were interested in him;



An Old-Time Ship

and so they sent Barnabas to Tarsus to find Saul. Barnabas found him, and the two sailed back together, and labored for a year together, most happily, in the great and growing city of Antioch.

Saul must have learned much at Antioch, and the people learned much from him and from Barnabas. There were other teachers there, we do not know how many; enough of them so that at the end of a year both Paul and Barnabas felt that they could be spared

for work more needy. But the year they labored together was an important year for them and for the Church, and for the whole future of the religion of Jesus in the world. For in Antioch, first of all, there grew up that type of Christianity which we know, the type which is simply Christian, and not Jewish.

After Saul and Barnabas had preached for a year in Antioch and it had become plain that the church there had ministers enough for its own work, the conviction grew strong that so great a church ought to be sending help elsewhere. There was a famine in Jerusalem, and people there were in distress. So the Christians in Antioch gathered money, and sent Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with it. There they met Mark, a young man who was Barnabas' nephew, and he went back to Antioch with them. But not long after this it was decided to send these same two men on a different kind of journey. So Saul and Barnabas set forth again, and this time by water; and Mark went with them.

They walked sixteen miles from Antioch to its sea-port, Seleucia, where they took the ship. From there they sailed about a hundred miles southwest to Cyprus. If the wind was fair, they may have made it in a day's sail; and they landed at the principal city of the island, Salamis. It was in the springtime, and probably about 47 A. D., and the sea must have been fine and the island beautiful.

Barnabas was at home in Cyprus, for he had been born there. Doubtless they met old friends of his. Together these two friends and their young companion, John Mark, traveled from one end of the island to

the other. It was an island with several lumbering and mining towns, and the teachers may have found opportunity for missionary work there.

By the time they reached the capital city, which was on the other side of the island, their fame had preceded them, and the governor of the island heard about them, and wanted them to tell him about their new Gospel. So they went and preached before him.

The governor, or deputy, as he was called, was named Sergius Paulus. He is spoken of as a prudent man, and he was a man of religious principle; but he had with him a sorcerer, in whom he believed, and who was intent on keeping the deputy from understanding the truth. This sorcerer's name was Bar-Jesus, or son of Jesus. To Saul he seemed more like a son of Satan. It seemed to Saul a terrible thing that this magician, who was a Jew, should be using his knowledge of the true God to prevent the deputy from learning more about God.

THE BLIND SORCERER

For a time the deputy was in doubt which was right, Saul and Barnabas or the magician. But Saul grew very bold as they stood there, and turning to the magician, he accused him of being a deceiver, and in the name of God commanded him to stop perverting the truth. The sorcerer trembled at the rebuke of Saul, and in his terror grew blind. We do not know whether he remained blind all his life thereafter, or

whether, like Saul, he afterward received sight. Let us hope that in time he saw the truth, and that, with that vision, his sight returned.

The deputy was no longer in doubt. He decided at once that the magician had been a false leader and that Saul and Barnabas were teachers of the true religion. So Sergius Paulus, the governor of the island, became a Christian.

This was one of the first times that the new religion met a false faith in a hand-to-hand grapple like this, and the faith of the Gospel won the contest. It must have given new faith to Saul and Barnabas, when they saw how their work was succeeding.

Another important thing happens now. Up to this time the great missionary apostle has been known by the name of Saul, but his new name, Paul, is now adopted. It has been thought that Saul, weary of the name which he had borne as a persecutor, and glad to discard a name to which clung such unhappy memories, changed it at this time, through his friendship for this governor, Sergius Paulus. Anyway, it is here that we first come to know him by the name which afterward became famous in all the world.

From the eastern end of the island of Cyprus Paul and Barnabas sailed for the coast of Asia Minor. It was not a long journey, but it was longer than Mark wanted to take. The poor boy had grown homesick, and he left them and returned to Jerusalem. He made the mistake of his life, and it was a long time before Paul forgot it. However, we must not think too ill of him for that one failure. He proved a good man afterward, as we shall learn. And there was

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SACRIFICE OFFERED TO PAUL AND BARNABAS.

some gain in returning to Jerusalem. He saw more of Peter than he could otherwise have done, and doubtless had a new interest in everything about Jesus. And he learned so much about Jesus that in time he wrote a little book about him. Perhaps you have read that book. It is the shortest of the four Gospels and you know its name.

So Mark went back, and Paul and Barnabas went on to the cities of the mainland. In one of those cities they were received with so much honor that the heathen priests were ready to offer sacrifice to them as gods. But Paul and Barnabas stopped this false worship. Unhappily, before they left that city, Paul was taken out and stoned, and was so badly hurt that he was left for dead; but he recovered and went painfully on his way.

At this time they preached to some of the people in the southern part of Galatia, to whom Paul afterward wrote a letter; and he tells us that he was sick while he was among them. He may have suffered with fever, which is common along the shores of Pamphilia.

At this time he met another young man in whom he became much interested, and who later was his companion, a fine youth named Timothy.

But the most important thing that happened on this journey was at Antioch. Not the Antioch from which they started; that was Antioch in Syria, and this was Antioch in Pisidia. You must look at the map and you will see the two cities of the same name. We remember what a great thing happened in Syrian Antioch; the disciples were first called Christians

there. A great thing happened in Pisidian Antioch; there the disciples first turned to the pagans and offered them the Gospel freely. Up to this time they had been preaching in the synagogues, and they still preached there at times; but when the Jews showed that they did not care for the Gospel, and the Gentiles were eager for it, Paul and Barnabas turned from the Jews and preached to the Gentiles. We must read the story of it just as the Bible tells it, for it is one of the most important stories in the whole Bible.

And as they went out, they besought that these words might be spoken to them the next sabbath. Now when the synagogue broke up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying,

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,
That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were or-

dained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region. But the Jews urged on the devout women of honorable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred

PAUL AND BARNABAS TURN TO THE GENTILES.

up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto

Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.—(Acts 13:42-52.)

QUESTIONS

Among what people did Christianity begin its work?

How did the Jews feel toward the Gentiles?

Where were the disciples first called Christians?

Name some of the Teachers who lived in this city.

Which of them have we heard of before?

Who of them went forth to find another?

Where did he go?

How long did they remain in the city?

Where did they then go?

What do we know about the island to which they journeyed?

What boy went with them?

What adventure did they have upon the island?

By what new name is Saul now called?

Where did they go when they left the island?

What adventures befell them there?

CHAPTER XV

A GREAT DEBATE

ARNABAS and Paul returned to their friends in Antioch, and told all about their voyage, and the adventures that had happened to them, and their friends were greatly pleased. Especially were they glad to know that it had been decided to preach the Gospel to Gentiles as well as Jews; for the church at Antioch believed in this.

It was now fourteen years since the conversion of Saul, and he had become a great preacher and traveller. But he was almost unknown in Jerusalem, where he had been but twice since the day when he went forth to persecute the church in Damascus. So he was now to make another journey to Jerusalem. For a most serious question had arisen in the church there, and it was being discussed with great earnestness.

Some disciples came to Antioch from Jerusalem, and were horrified to find that the disciples there treated all Christians alike, whether they were Jewish Christians or Gentile Christians. They were shocked to learn that when Peter was visiting in Antioch he was in the habit of eating with Gentiles. They opposed this so bitterly that Peter withdrew

from the Gentiles, and Paul rebuked him for it. Paul tells of this in his letter to the Galatians:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void the grace of God;

for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.—(Galatians 2:11-21.)

This shows us how much in earnest Paul was about this matter. But other people were equally earnest. To those who had been trained as Jews, and who still regarded themselves as Jews, even though they acknowledged Jesus, it seemed impossible that anyone could be saved who did not keep the whole Law of Moses. Paul and Barnabas and the other teachers in Antioch stood firm, and the disciples from Jerusalem, who had had their training under James, were equally confident. And so it was determined that Paul and Barnabas should go to Jerusalem, and have the matter out.

They set forth and took Titus with them, and Titus was a Gentile Christian. But, as they went, they preached all the way through Phoenicia and Samaria, and declared that they were right and that the Gospel was to be preached to Gentiles as well as to Jews. In general the Christians of Galilee and Samaria were glad of it.

Years later Paul well remembered this visit, and remembered also that the Jewish Christians demanded that Titus should be circumcised and that he and Barnabas stubbornly refused to permit it, and finally had their way about it.

When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received with cordiality by the Apostles, and talked matters over with them. It seemed as if they had reached an agreement. But, when the discussion became more public, it was found that very many held to the old

view, so they had a very hot discussion about it. It was Peter at length who helped matters out, by telling how he had been led to recognize the Gentiles.

And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter. And when there had been much questioning, Peter rose up, and said unto them,

Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.—(Acts 15:4-11.)

Up to this time Paul and Barnabas had hardly had a chance to tell their story. But the people listened now, and they told how wonderfully their work was prospering among the Gentiles, and how people who had never been Jews, and never could be persuaded

to take the whole burden of the Jewish law, were willing and eager to accept the Gospel.

And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles through them.—(Acts 15:12.)

Every one was wondering what James would say. People in the early Church held him in high honor. He was a brother of Jesus, and was honored for his pure and very just life. But he was known to be very conservative, and there was much expectation that he would oppose this innovation. But to the surprise of many, James favored the new method. He did not mean to adopt it himself, but intended to continue to the end of his life keeping the whole law of Moses; and this he believed to be best for those Christians who had been born Jews. But, as for other Christians, he believed Paul was right, and that this was a fulfilment of the hopes of the prophets.

The earnestness of Paul and Barnabas, the frank avowal of Peter, and the cordial approval of James, settled the matter, and the whole council, that had seemed hopelessly divided, came to an agreement. They gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, and agreed that when they returned to Antioch Judas and Silas should go with them, and take their greetings, and bear a letter prepared in accordance with the suggestions of James. This they did, and the two messengers returned with Paul and Barnabas. They preached all the way back, as they had preached coming, and they had a very joyful series of

meetings. Paul grew to like Silas very much, and Silas became one of Paul's fast friends, and afterward journeyed with him. We are not sure which Judas this was; for Judas was a common name. It may possibly have been the brother of Jesus and of James; but this we do not know.

Luke was not present at this council, but he heard Paul tell about it many times, and also heard it from others who were there. He made a copy of the letter, and this is what it said:

The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.—(Acts 15:23-29.)

We can well imagine the joy of that journey and the welcome which Paul and Barnabas received when they arrived in Antioch. A great crowd assembled

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PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM.

as soon as it was known that Paul and Barnabas were back. And when it was told that they had brought two men from Jerusalem, who would speak at the same meeting, the news spread far and wide.

It was a great day for Paul. He told the whole story, and how he had fought the matter through, and what Peter and James had said, and then Barnabas told the things which Paul had omitted, and then they introduced Judas and Silas, who read the letter from the Jerusalem brethren and commented upon it. It was a great and happy meeting and its influence was widely felt.

Silas and Judas made a visit of some weeks in Antioch, and, when they left, there was a farewell reception; for the two men from Jerusalem had had a good time in Antioch, and were ready now to go somewhere else. But Silas enjoyed his new friends so much that from time to time he came back to Antioch, and later made a long journey with Paul. Luke sums up in a short story the account of the way Paul and Barnabas went back from Jerusalem, and what happened in the next few weeks:

So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. And after they had spent some time there, they were dismissed in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth. But Paul and Barnabas tarried in

Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.—(Acts 15:30-35.)

This debate in Jerusalem was one of the most important things that ever happened. For it was settled there for all time that a Christian might be just simply a Christian, and that, if the Jewish law helped him to be a Christian, he was to keep it; but if it did not, then it was not necessary. The more we understand about that debate the more important it appears to us. And we are very glad that Paul and Barnabas had the courage to insist that a Christian need not become a Jew.

QUESTIONS

What did the disciples find who came from Jerusalem to Antioch?

Tell how Peter made a mistake at this time.

Was the question an important one?

What did Paul decide to do?

What about the great debate at Jerusalem?

What did Paul say?

What did Peter say?

What did James say?

What did they decide to do about it?

Was this a matter of importance?

CHAPTER XVI

THE ROAD

"ALL roads lead to Rome." That is one of the most significant facts in the spread of the Gospel. When Barnabas and Saul went out on their first missionary journey, they sailed out among the islands of the Mediterranean. When they went forth again, Barnabas followed the same method. But Paul began preaching in the cities that lay on the great Roman roads. This was a very important step. The Gospel spread along these imperial highways. From the time of the Second Missionary Journey the Roman roads became important factors in the spread of the Gospel.

When people inquired of the early Christians, "What do you call your new religion?" they were accustomed to reply, "We call it The Road."

If you will turn to the Book of Acts in your Revised Version, you will find a number of places where Christianity is spoken of as "The Way," and where the word Way begins with a capital. The Way is a proper name, the name by which those Christians designated their religion. Saul went from Jerusalem to Damascus to imprison those who were of The Way

(Acts 9:2). When he preached in Ephesus some spoke evil of The Way (Acts 19:9). In that same city there arose no small stir concerning The Way (19:23). In his defense in Jerusalem Paul confessed that in former times he had persecuted The Way (22:4). Before Felix he confessed that he served the God of his forefathers in what the Jews called a sect, but he called The Way (24:14). Felix, having himself some knowledge of The Way (24:22) heard Paul with greater appreciation. In all these passages the Revised Version uses the capital; and there are at least three others where it might be so employed (Acts 16:17; 18:25-26).

The word "way" would be a good translation; except that in English, it means many things which the Greek word did not mean. To us way means habit, method, custom; but the word which the early Christians used involved no ambiguity; to them it meant not method, but road.

The figure was already familiar. The prophets had used it. The first book of the prophecies of Isaiah had closed with the vision of a wide road of righteousness untrodden by the unclean and protected from ravenous beasts, on which wayfaring men though simple were not to go astray (Is. 35). The opening vision of the second volume containing the inspiring prophecies of the return from exile opened with a highway, graded and made safe and straight, for the revelation of the glory of God (Is. 40:3-5). Other prophets used the figure of the road. Jesus Himself employed it in most significant fashion. That interesting document of the second century, "The

Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," begins with the words, "There are two roads"; and its name for Christianity is "The Road of Life."

This was the name, and the only name, to which the early Christians answered. They did not at first acknowledge that name "Christians" given them by the heathen, beautiful as that name was, and containing a confession of faith in the Messianic office of Jesus. They did not assume that even finer name of "Jesuits"—a name unhappily since disgraced by secrecy, treachery and tyranny. Either the personal name Jesus or the royal title Christ might have afforded them a name, and such names in time were bestowed upon them and acknowledged by them, but at the outset they knew their religion simply as "The Road."

If all things came to him who waits there would be no need of roads. Most things come, if they come at all, to him who goes out and gets them. And because the quests of life run not always diversely, many men must travel in the same direction, and roads are made.

Where a traveler makes his way with no thought of return, he is careless of anything save to go in the right direction and by a comfortable route. If he must come again, he blazes a trail. If he goes often he treads a path. And if he goes still more frequently, and others with him, he and they join and make a road. Life has its lonely ways, walked by each man alone. Life has its blazed trails, marked for anticipated return. Life has its beaten paths, worn smooth by the feet of those who walk therein. The

footprint of the explorer becomes the trail of the pioneer, and this the beaten path of the settler. Life has its broad highways, cast up and prepared for the generations, arteries for the life of nations and peoples. Roads are made partly by travel, but partly also by grading and paving. A road is more than a path. It is made in part by travel, but in part also by preparation.

The religion of Christ is more than a path; it is a road. The journey itself is interesting and profitable: and it is well that now and then we consider the highway we travel.

In the farewell conversation, Jesus having told His disciples that He was soon to leave them, said, "Whither I go, ye know The Road."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how can we know The Road?"

Jesus said to him, "I am The Road."—(John 14: 4-6.)

Thomas was half right. They did not know where Jesus was going; and it is an interpolation which makes him say, "Whither I go, ye know." Jesus did not say that. He said, "Whither I go, ye know The Road." The question of Thomas, which had long been waiting to be asked, grew out of the fact that they had now been following for some time in a way that seemed to have but one, and that a most disastrous, ending. Whither was this pathway taking them? To the cross, Jesus had said; and Thomas had been first to say, "Let us go with him that we may die with him." And yet Palm Sunday had shown that if the Lord chose He could find another road, and

one more pleasant for Himself and delightful for those who followed Him. Why might they not now catch at this word of His, "Whither I go, ye know The Road," and ask Him plainly whither the road He was following was to end?

Jesus did not tell them very much more about where He was going. Where He went did not concern them as much as they supposed. "Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say unto you." (John 13:33). And that was because it was not possible, neither was it best for them at once to go there; and also because He Himself was not to remain away.

"All Roads Lead to Rome."

Gladly and not as those driven along a blind way, we follow the Road. For He who is the Road, is also the Truth and the Life.

QUESTIONS

By what name did the early Christians call their religion?

Try and remember some of the passages in which there is mention of "The Way."

Are there any such passages in the Prophets?

Did Jesus use any such expressions?

Why is it appropriate to speak of life as a road?

CHAPTER XVII

A QUARREL BETWEEN TWO OLD FRIENDS

QUARRELS are not pleasant to read about. We do not like to remember that two men so good as Paul and Barnabas should ever have had a quarrel. But they did. And it was a quarrel of importance. It was not simply a day's misunderstanding, but a long separation of two men who had much reason to love each other. And a young friend of theirs was to blame for it.

That young friend was Mark, who was a nephew of Barnabas. He went with Paul and Barnabas on their first voyage of discovery, but got homesick and went back. Paul was out of patience with him, and from time to time, when Barnabas mentioned him, Paul would reply that he had no confidence in a young man who had undertaken to do a thing and had dropped the matter midway.

Barnabas was accustomed to reply that Paul ought to remember that Mark still was young, and a well meaning lad, who might yet do well. But Paul was impatient and could not hear the name of Mark without remembering his fault.

This went on for some time, until Paul and Barnabas began to plan another trip. By this time Mark was eager to go on another voyage, and Barnabas was willing to take him. But Paul would not listen to the suggestion for a minute. They argued the matter constantly, and the more they argued it, the less they agreed. Finally they agreed to disagree. Paul told Luke all about it afterward, and this is Luke's story of the quarrel:

And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare. And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus: but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.—(Acts 15:36-41.)

Who was right, Barnabas or Paul?

Both were right. Paul was right when he declared that Mark had done a wrong thing in leaving them.

But Barnabas was right in trusting Mark again. Barnabas was a better judge than Paul of the real heart of Mark. He had failed once, but would not fail again. So Barnabas trusted Mark, when Paul refused to believe in him, just as he had once trusted

Paul, when no one else would believe in him. And Barnabas helped to make a man of Mark.

Did Paul ever admit his mistake? I think he did. Years afterward, when Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he wrote to the Colossians and named the people who

THE SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS

had stood by him and been a comfort, and Mark was among them. "These are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, who have been a comfort unto me," he said. And then, thinking that Mark might sometime visit these people, and that they might have

some doubt about him because of Paul's former distrust of him, he wrote, "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him."

That shows us how fully Paul came to trust Mark, and how strong was his desire that any prejudice on his account against Mark should be removed without further delay.

But we have one even more interesting word of Paul. In his very last letter, one written to Timothy, he writes that he is almost alone, in prison, with winter coming on, and that he has been deserted by some whom he trusted. "Only Luke is with me," he says; and he urges Timothy to come to him and try to get to Rome before winter.

But he wanted someone else, and someone whom he could trust, and he told Timothy whom to bring with him. Who was it? He wanted some one as faithful as "Luke, the beloved physician," who was with him when he wrote. He wanted some one as faithful as his "dear son" Timothy. Where could he find a third faithful enough to class with these? "Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is useful to me for ministering," he says. Mark had proved not merely a faithful young man, but one whom Paul had come to like so well that he wanted him near him. He knew he could count on him.

It is delightful to read these words and to understand how Paul changed his mind about Mark. It is good, also, to know that Mark had somewhat changed. And we are impressed again with the great heart of Barnabas, who trusted men whom no one else would

trust, and we are glad that he believed in the young man Paul and in the young man Mark.

Mark was the companion of a third great man. In some of his travels he became the companion of Peter. From Peter he learned what he could not learn from Paul, the facts of the earthly life of Jesus. And Mark wrote them down. So far as we know, his was the first of the Gospels that have come down to us. It is the shortest, simplest of the four. We wonder if it would ever have been written if Barnabas had not had more faith than Paul in the young man Mark.

So far as we know, Paul and Barnabas did not work together after this. Paul formed a new method of working, and found new companions; and Barnabas, we are sure, was doing good somewhere, and perhaps finding other men, as he had found Paul and Mark, who could do things he could not do. But of one thing we are sure. No permanent feeling of unkindness continued between them. Paul's later references to Barnabas in his letters are full of the spirit of true friendliness.

It was not well that these two friends quarreled, and it is well that they made up their differences. But it is well that they separated. It gave each one an opportunity to work in his own way. It set two missionary groups at work instead of one. And it brought to the front some fine young men whom otherwise we might not have known, among them the fine young Timothy and the faithful Mark.

After the separation, Barnabas took Mark and sailed again for Cyprus, over the same course which

he and Paul had taken before. But Paul and Silas walked northward around the end of the Mediterranean Sea, through the mountain pass known as the Cilician Gates, and so came to the cities in Asia Minor where he had been before. This is the story of several months of hard work, with special reference to the finding of Timothy.

And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek. And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.—(Acts 16:1-5.)

Attended by these two young men—Silas, whom he trusted with good reason, and Timothy, whom he was coming to love as his own son—Paul would seem to have had no reason for other than a happy journey; and we may be sure that the two young disciples found him an interesting traveling companion. And there was much to encourage them. They were received with great heartiness; the churches grew under their ministry; and they had proof that their work was not in vain.

Yet Paul was not wholly happy. He was often

reminded of Barnabas, who had traveled this route with him before, and with whom he had recently quarreled. In every place he visited, people asked him about Barnabas, and why he was not with Paul. Paul hardly knew how to answer these questions, so natural, yet so difficult. He did not know where Barnabas was; he often wondered.

During part of the time Paul was not well. He wrote afterward how this journey was accomplished in weakness and pain. We do not know the details, but we are impressed with the references which are made to Paul's sight. Apparently he suffered from defective vision. Some physical weakness, which he called a "thorn in the flesh," which he often prayed about, hindered his work, and prevented his doing things that he wanted to do. His eager spirit went beyond his bodily strength.

On this journey he attempted to do a number of things which he found he could not do. He turned eastward and northward, and something stopped him. He felt that he was hampered and frustrated. He felt that in some way God was shutting doors in his face. He was not strong, and there were hindrances of various kinds.

And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.—(Acts 16:6-8.)

At Troas he waited, perhaps was sick there. It was a time of uncertainty and trial. What was to happen next?

QUESTIONS

What two good men had a quarrel?
What did they quarrel about?
What do we know about the young man concerning whom they quarrelled?
What had he done that he ought not to have done?
Who was right about it?
Did Paul ever change his mind?
Which way did Barnabas go after the quarrel?
Which way did Paul go?
Did good come of this unhappy experience?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BOY WHO FAILED AND TRIED AGAIN

MANY a boy has apparently failed, but in the end, through the support and confidence of some good man, he has reached the pinnacle of success. One of these was Mark. Barnabas and Paul quarreled over Mark. Who was he? He was a nephew of Barnabas, and probably was born in Cyprus. But his family moved to Jerusalem, and had a house there. Some people think that his father was "the good man of the house" in whose upper room Jesus and the disciples ate the last supper, and in which the early Christians gathered for worship. If so, what memories he must have cherished of those days! What wonderful scenes he must have half-witnessed, what fragments of conversations and prayers he must have overheard!

There is a singular little verse in the Gospel of Mark in connection with the account of the betrayal of Jesus. It says, "And a certain young man followed with him, having a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked body: and they lay hold on him; but he left the linen cloth and fled naked."

Who was he, and what became of him, and what of it, anyway? Very many people have wondered what that verse meant. None of the other evangelists said anything about this young man. Why should Mark have told about him?

The answer which some people make is this:

That young man was Mark himself. He was asleep in his home when the Lord and His disciples left, and he rose and followed them through the night, wondering what was about to happen. He kept out of sight, but near them, and, when Jesus was arrested, he moved up into the crowd. But some one turned and seized him, and he ran in terror through the night, hastening out of the garden, across the valley of the Kidron, through the silent and deserted streets, and home to his father's house.

This would account for the fact that none of the other evangelists mentioned the matter. No one noticed it, or thought it of much importance. A lad, pushing in where he had no business, was seized, became frightened, and ran away; that was all any one else thought of it. Every one else had forgotten it before morning. But Mark did not forget. He shuddered in his bed at home as he remembered it all; the chill of the night; the sound of the mob; the glare of the torches; the rough hand laid upon him; the terror and the breathless headlong flight; he could not forget it. He lay and thought of it; he dreamed of it when he fell into a troubled sleep; he mentioned it to no one in the morning; and only years afterward, in this unobtrusive way, did he let his own part in that strange scene find a place in the record.

But how he must have wondered, as he lay in bed, what was happening to Jesus! And how terribly real it all came back to him afterwards in the light of what happened!

The name of Mark's mother was Mary, and she lived, as we remember, in Jerusalem. If the upper room was in her home, Mark had many experiences, and doubtless some duties, in the forty days that followed. He may not have understood all that was going on about him; but he must have seen and witnessed strange things.

All this we conjecture because of this strange little incident which Mark alone records. What next we know of him is that when Paul and Barnabas started on their first missionary journey they took Mark with them as their attendant.

Very likely he asked to go; for he remembered Cyprus, and wanted to revisit it. He enjoyed the sail and the experiences of travel, but, as we know, he tired of it after a while. He may have been homesick. He may have found his duties unpleasant. He may not have liked it that Paul was insisting on working among the Gentiles. Whatever the reason, he was sick and tired of the journey, as we know; and, at a most inopportune time, as Paul thought, he deserted and went back.

We know, also, how Barnabas trusted Mark, as he had trusted and supported Paul, when no one else believed in him.

And now we are to remind ourselves that Mark redeemed his record. He was faithful to Barnabas. He behaved himself so well that Paul learned to

trust him again. And he became to Peter what Timothy was to Paul. Peter calls Mark "my son."

So the boy who failed once became a useful man afterward.

And he obtained a great education, working as he did with Barnabas, Paul and Peter. No young man of his time, so far as we know, had a more valuable or varied training.

One thing Mark came to feel that no one else had felt so strongly up to that time, and that was the need of some written record of what Jesus had said and done. Peter did not feel this need; he had known Jesus personally, and was accustomed to tell the story of His life, and perhaps did not feel that anything more was necessary. Paul felt that it was more important to know Jesus after the Spirit than after the flesh. But to thousands of young Christians, who had not known Jesus, the question was constantly occurring, "What is to become of the story of Jesus when all the men are dead who saw Him and heard Him teach?"

Mark was listening whenever Peter told about Jesus. He paid the closest attention when any of the others who had known Jesus came to visit Peter. Mentally he arranged the incidents as he heard them, and in time began to make notes.

Mark doubtless had occasion to write letters for Peter, Paul or Barnabas, and perhaps for all. He sometimes wondered why none of these great men told the story of Jesus. But none of them did. And so, after a good many years, Mark began to write it out in order.

It was a great day for the work of the Lord when Mark sat down and began to write his Gospel. We do not know when he did it or how it happened; but one day after most of the men who had known Jesus face to face had died, and the younger people were wishing that some one would tell them the whole story of Jesus, Mark sat down alone and began to write. Did he really know how great a work he was beginning? At the time there was no other Gospel written; and, so far as we know, no one had any plan to write one. Matthew may have been gathering material for a book on the discourses of Jesus; and John was surely keeping in memory the precious words he had heard from Jesus, and Luke was listening and learning; but none of these were written, when one day Mark sat down and began to write his Gospel.

He wasted no time in preliminaries. He made no apologies or explanations. An account of the work of Jesus was needed, and he sat down to write it. And, as he wrote, the good Spirit of God brought things to his memory which he had heard of Jesus, and the story was written in clear, terse Greek.

What an interesting story it was, and how concisely and admirably Mark told it!

Mark's Gospel is very brief and direct. It is the shortest of the Gospels. He begins with the ministry of John, and plunges straight into the heart of his narrative. If you will read his Gospel, you will be surprised to see how swiftly it moves, how short, direct and vivid it all is.

We are not now studying the life of Jesus; that

belongs to another volume. We are learning how the men who knew the life of Jesus told that story in all the world. We are reminding ourselves how an important part in the telling of that story was done by a boy who failed at first.

Most boys fail sometimes. But there is hope for the boy who fails. If his heart is right, and he is willing to learn and to try again, he need not be discouraged on account of one failure, or even more. And, as he reads the beautiful little Gospel of Mark, he may say to himself, "This oldest of the Gospels was written by a man who made a failure in his youth; but some one believed in him, and helped him to a new start; and he tried again."

QUESTIONS

What do we know about the early history of Mark?

What verse is there in Mark's Gospel which is thought to be a part of his own experience?

What was his mother's name?

Where did she live?

Where did he go on his first journey with Paul and Barnabas?

With what apostle was he afterward associated?

For what great thing do we remember Mark?

CHAPTER XIX

"WE"

E" IS a very little word, but a very important one in our study of the Book of Acts. And it slips in the first time so quietly that we are in danger of passing it by. But somewhere along near the middle of the book, we find that the story is being told by someone who was present. Up to this time he has been saying "They." We are told that "they" returned from the mount of Olives to the upper room. "They" prayed, and were guided in selecting an apostle to take the place of Judas. "They" ate their bread in thankfulness and sweet fellowship. "They" went everywhere, preaching the Word.

Then, without any flourish of trumpets, a new person enters the group of those whose story is being told. Instead of saying "they," he now says "we."

Do not despise this little word; it is one of great importance; and the greatest scholars of the world have read the Acts of the Apostles with a magnifying glass, as it were, to find every time this little word "we" occurs. They are wiser men than we in some things, but not in their ability to find this word We can find it wherever they have found it.

It may be that we have been reading our Bible carelessly, yet sooner or later we shall notice that we have made this change. We read that "we made a straight course" across the sea to Samothrace; that, ar-

Luke Writing His Gospel

riving at Philippi, "we were in this city tarrying certain days"; that "we went forth without the gate to the riverside"; that "we sat down, and spake unto the women"; that Lydia invited "us" to her home, and

that "we" accepted. And we find the same word later on. And then it disappears, and we are told how "they" did things. And then, after a while, we find the little word "we" again.

We cannot overestimate the importance of this word in the book we are studying; and we shall do well to find it wherever it is.

Let us find first where this word begins to occur. If we look very earnestly, we shall find it first in this verse, which is not quite half way through the Book of Acts:

"And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them."

It will be better for each reader to take the New Testament and find this verse, and see how the word "we" begins to appear. It will not require very long search to discover it.

It requires two or more persons to say "we." Paul was one; but who were the others?

We have only to look back a few verses to find who two of the others were. One was Silas, and the other was Timothy.

We know both these men. Silas was the brave friend who was imprisoned with Paul, and sang with him in the prison; and Timothy was the dear young friend to whom Paul wrote his last letter. So there were at least three who are to be included in this little word "we."

But, as we read farther on, we find that there must have been one other, at least; for we still find the

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ANSWERING THE VISION.

word "we" when one or more of these three were not present.

It may seem a small point to spend much time upon, but very many great men have spent many hours searching out the full meaning of this short word. And the search is very interesting and important.

But we will not spend longer time upon it. The word "we" as first used in this part of the book of Acts, included four men, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke. And it always means at least two, and those are Paul and Luke.

Paul and Silas and Timothy and Luke, these at the outset said "we." They had come from different cities, and through different experiences, to this meeting at Troas, and it was a most interesting bond which united them, and enabled them to say "we." When did they first use the word, and say "we will go into Macedonia?" Paul told them his vision; did he say "I must go into Macedonia," and did they volunteer to go with him? Or did he propose at the very outset that they should go together?

However it came about, they walked up the gangplank of the little Mediterranean ship, and said, "We are sailing for Macedonia." They may not have hired the best stateroom on the ship, but they were cared for in some way, and they looked not unlike the other passengers, but the difference was large, and it consisted in that which enabled them to say "we."

That is to say, in those parts of this book that tell the story in the first person, we are to understand that Luke himself was present, and saw what he is telling.

And when the story is told in the third person, Luke was not personally present, but learned the facts from some of the other disciples.

This distinction is so important that scholars agree in calling these portions of the Acts which use the word "we," the "we-sections." It will be seen, therefore, that we are not engaged in a trivial task when we seek out these uses of the little word.

And now let us inquire about this man Luke, who uses the word "we," and in that word includes himself as a companion of Paul.

He was a physician. Paul appears to have been sick while he was in the region of Troas, and it may have been his pain and weakness that brought Luke to his side. Luke must have been a comfort to the weary and burdened apostle. He was an educated man, and so was Paul. He was a representative of the Gentile world, with which Paul was gaining a larger and larger sympathy. We are quite certain that Luke was not a Jew.

Can we imagine what it meant to Paul to find in Troas this educated layman, who proved at once a healer of his body and a companion for his spirit? Not many high, not many mighty, had been chosen; not many of the early Christians were Paul's intellectual equals. And most of them, thus far, had been Jews. Here was a man of intelligence, of insight, of faith and of culture, ready to help him when he was sick, and to accompany him in his journeys to the ends of the earth.

We do not know where Luke lived. Some scholars think that he was a Macedonian, and that he guided

Paul first journey there. The reason they think this is that he appears to have stayed in Philippi after Paul left that city, and to have been there still when Paul returned a good while later. They think that either this had been his home, or that he went to his home in some other city in Macedonia. But other people think he lived in Troas, where he first met Paul. We do not know.

But we do know that he was a physician, an educated man, a brave man, and a faithful friend of Paul to the very end of his life.

So far as we know, Luke never preached. There is great need of preaching; but not all the disciples of Jesus are preachers. Luke practiced his profession, and did good in the name of Jesus.

But, although he did not preach, he wrote. He had never seen Jesus, so far as we know. But he came to know so many people who had been intimately acquainted with Jesus that after a time he wrote to a friend of his, whose name was Theophilus, an account of the things he had learned about Jesus. This is the way he began his story of the life and miracles of Jesus:

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty

concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed. —(Luke 1:1-4.)

He wrote the most beautiful book in the world. Beautiful as are the other Gospels, and each one of them has a beauty of its own, the story which Luke wrote to his friend Theophilus is in some respects the most beautiful of them all.

For some reason, the other evangelists, each of whom gave us something that none of the others gave, did not record this beautiful story, and we should have lost it, if it had not been for Luke.

Men who are scholars tell us that Luke uses medical terms and more precise language than the other evangelists in describing cases of sickness. This is what we should expect from a physician, such as Luke was. There are many other very interesting facts about the Gospel of Luke, and some interesting traditions about its author. There is an old tradition, which we do not feel sure is true, that Luke was a painter; and there are some old paintings of Jesus which it is said Luke painted; but this we do not think is true.

The things we know about Luke are very much more important than those which some people guess. And one thing we feel sure about is that the same man who wrote the Gospel of Luke, and addressed it to his friend Theophilus, wrote another book. That other book begins:

The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that

he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me; for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.—(Acts 1:1-5.)

This book, also, is addressed to Theophilus, and tells us of a "former treatise." This can mean no other than that the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles were written by the same man.

Now we see the importance of the "We-sections" of Acts.

In those Luke is telling us things which he himself has witnessed. So we see how important in this book of Acts is the little word "we."

The word "we" is always important. Good deeds are being done, but who is doing them? Is it "they"? Or is it "we"? With those whose joint labor for the good of men and the glory of God makes possible the plural number, are we so evidently and intimately associated that we can say "we"?

Luke was able to say "we" in describing some of the most perilous adventures of the Apostle Paul. He was with him in the midst of mobs; he shared with him the fatigue of travel; he was present on Paul's last voyage and ship-wreck. He attended him in

Rome. Luke never was imprisoned, so far as we know. He did not preach nor expose himself to the fury of the enemies of Paul. But Luke was there to care for Paul in his imprisonment, and to bind him up after his scourgings, and help him on his way. In the very last letter Paul wrote, urging Timothy to come and see him, and to come before winter if possible, he says, "Only Luke is with me." And Luke was with him to the end.

Are we faithfully doing, in some humble way, the will of God and our Saviour? Then our names belong to the company of those who can say "we." And to us comes the salutation, by way of the Apostle Paul, "Luke, the beloved physician, saluteth you."

Brave men and women have wrought through the ages for all the good that now is, and the greater good that is to be. It is possible to join their ranks, and to speak of them not as "they" but as "we." We may entitle ourselves to a part in all the glories for which the ages have been waiting; those who have labored for these things are not merely "they"; for by our sympathy and fellowship in such labors "they" are now "we."

There are high school and college yells which begin:

"Who are we? Who are we?"

And the askers of the above question answer it themselves by shouting in stentorian tones the initials of their school, or the motto of their athletic team.

Well, who are we? We are Paul and Luke and you and I, and a large number of other people who are associated in the effort to make the world better.

In the past "they" did these things; but now "we" are part of the force working for righteousness.

It is a large word, that little "we." Paul and Silas and Timothy and Luke and you and I, and a great multitude whom no man can number, "we" are working to bring in the kingdom of God.

Luke was a Gentile, and so he was particularly interested in all that he learned about the sympathy of Jesus for the Gentiles. Luke told the story of the Good Samaritan. Luke told how Jesus sent out the seventy disciples, and just as the twelve were chosen for the "twelve tribes" so the seventy were chosen for "the seventy nations." Luke put into his Gospel a great many little tender touches that show what a warm and sympathetic heart he had, and how God guided him through his own sympathies to record those words which Jesus spoke for all nations. And do you remember that the very sweetest of the parables is told by Luke alone? Do you know which parable that is? Turn to the fifteenth chapter of Luke, read this sweet story, and remember that, of the four evangelists, Luke alone records it.

QUESTIONS

What little word do we note in this chapter?
Who were the people referred to in this word?
Where was Paul when he saw the vision?
Where did he go?
Who went with him?
To what country did they go?
On what continent did they land?
To whom did they first preach?

CHAPTER XX

THE SEARCH FOR THE MAN IN THE VISION

PAUL and his friends crossed the Adriatic Sea, following the vision of the man of Macedonia, desiring the apostle to come over and help the people of that country. As the boat drew near to shore, Paul may have scanned the faces of the people on the dock to see if he could find the man whom he had seen in the vision. The man was not there.

Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke had sailed a hundred and forty miles seeking this man, and when they landed they did not find him. They landed at Neapolis, and walked ten miles to the capital of the district, which was named Philippi. People here spoke Greek, and Paul and Luke, and probably both the others could speak Greek and were at home here. But Paul did not find the man.

On the afternoon of the Sabbath they walked out of the city and found a place by the riverside where the women met to pray. There they talked to the women, among whom was one named Lydia, who was manager of a business, and agent for the sale of silk and linen that had been dyed at Thyatira, which

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THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA.

was famous for its coloring. Paul preached to her and her friends, and Lydia was converted. She was the first person converted to Christianity in Europe.

The Macedonians had shown no interest in their coming. No one had been on hand to welcome them.

PREACHING TO THE WOMEN BY THE RIVERSIDE

And Paul could not help wondering whether it was just for this that the Lord had called him over the sea.

But Paul got into trouble in Philippi by healing a poor girl who had some nervous trouble, and who was being used to make money for her managers through her pretended wisdom. Paul and Silas were publicly whipped, and thrown into jail.

They sang in prison that night, bound as they were, and sore as they were from their beating. They still had faith and good courage.

At midnight there was an earthquake; and it shook open the prison doors. This is just what happened in 1908 in Messina, when the earthquake freed the prisoners in that city.

But Paul and Silas did not try to run away; and when the jailer came, running, and in fear lest he should be put to death on account of the escape of the prisoners, Paul called to him that they were all there, and not trying to escape.

The jailer was much impressed. He took Paul and Silas to his own rooms in the prison, and washed them, and cared for them. And Paul preached to him, and he and his family became Christians. Here Paul found the first man who had been ready to listen to him. The first man converted in Europe was converted in jail.

It would have been worth spending a night in jail to have been there next morning after the earthquake, and to have seen and heard Paul. Some officers came from the magistrates, and told the jailer to produce the prisoners. The jailer gladly brought Paul and Silas face to face with the officers, sure that good news awaited them.

It was indeed good news. The magistrates had

sent to have the prisoners released. Whether the earthquake had terrified them, or whether some rumor that Paul was a Roman citizen had come to them, the magistrates were more than willing to have Paul and Silas released from prison, and the officers brought the word to the jailer and to the prisoners.

Then Paul stood up in all the dignity of his manhood, and said, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and bring us out!"

That was a fine spirit of independence for a man whose back was bruised with rods, and whose ankles and wrists were aching with the unwonted weight of fetters. It was one of the most manly utterances ever spoken; and when the officers heard it, they were alarmed.

They hurried back to the magistrates, and said, "Those men are Romans; and they refuse to leave the prison!"

Then the magistrates came down in person, and politely requested Paul and Silas to go free.

A crowd must have gathered by this time; and the news must have spread among them. They must have understood just how the magistrates had been compelled to humiliate themselves before the prisoners.

Paul knew well when to assert his rights. He knew also when to forego them. Roman citizen that he was, this was the first of many beatings to which he submitted. He knew what were his rights, and

he sometimes insisted upon them, but not always. Often he did not use the power that was his, "lest I should hinder the Gospel of Christ."

There are evils that must be resisted. There are wrongs that cannot be put down by mere silence. Sometimes a good man owes it to the situation to contend earnestly for his rights. But there are other times when, knowing his rights, he can forego them for the greater good.

In the Philippian Jail

The missionaries left Philippi and went to Thessalonica, and began preaching there. But they got into trouble, and the man in whose house they were staying was put under bonds to keep the peace.

Then they went to Berœa, and preached there. But some rude and bad men came over from Thessalonica and stirred up a mob. The work was very promising, but there was deep prejudice against Paul. Paul left Berœa with two friends, leaving his companions to continue the work, while he went to Athens to wait for them.

Now think of what had happened to Paul on this journey. He had separated from Barnabas, and since that time everything seemed to have gone wrong. He attempted to preach in Asia, and some-

thing happened to prevent. He tried to go north and east to preach in Bithinia and Galatia, but they were prevented. Finally they came to Troas, or Troy, the city of which Homer wrote in the Iliad, and there was where Paul saw the vision, and hurried over into Macedonia. He did not find the man. Instead he was whipped, put into jail, and driven from city to city. Finally, he went to Athens to get out of the way, because the prejudice against him was so strong that the others could do better without him.

No wonder he wrote afterward that his flesh had no rest; without were fightings, and within were fears. Lonely, sick at heart, anxious and sorrowful, Paul left the place to which the vision had called him. Had he found the man who wanted him to come over into Macedonia and help? Yes; whether he knew it or not, he had found the man. And the churches which he now established were a great comfort to him afterward. And none of them gave him more of joy than the one that was founded in the first place in which he preached the Gospel in Europe, where the first congregation was made up of women, and the only man who stopped to hear him was in jail.

QUESTIONS

What do we know about the city of Philippi?
Whom did Paul and his friends meet there?
Who was Lydia?
How did Paul and Silas get into jail?
How did they act in jail?
What occurred that night in prison?
How did the jailer then treat them?

What word did the magistrates send them next morning?

What answer did Paul send?

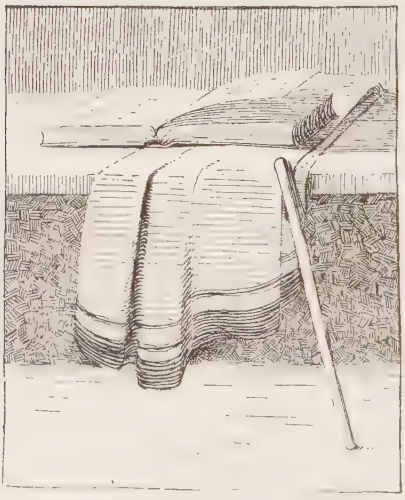
Why were the magistrates alarmed when they learned that Paul was a Roman?

Where did Paul go from Philippi?

What happened to him there?

What do we know about his state of mind at this time?

Why was this work important?



CHAPTER XXI

A VISIT TO ATHENS

ATHENS was in some respects the most interesting of all the cities in Europe. No city had such literary associations; none had a longer roll of great names which it held in honor. Paul must have looked forward with no little interest to a visit there. One who visits even at this day the historic land of Greece feels the thrill of Byron's lines that ring with the memories of dead glories and victories long past:

"Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain cave,
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! Can it be
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven, crouching slave!
Say, is not this Thermopylae?
These waters blue that round you lave,
O servile offspring of the free,—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!

" 'Twere long to tell and sad to trace
Each step from splendor to disgrace.

Enough, no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul till from itself it fell!
Yes; self-abasement paved a way
To villain bonds and despot sway."

The glorious days of Greece are past; were past in Byron's day, and even in the day of Paul. But the Parthenon was standing in Paul's day, not as now a melancholy ruin, but a gleaming crown of architectural glory on the summit of the Acropolis. Even then it was "Greece, but living Greece no more"; but the memorials of ancient greatness were not as now mere sepulchres of their own past.

Glad as Paul must have been to visit Athens, he was not happy in the conditions which led to the visit; for he had been driven out of one city after another, and was here not to work, but merely to retire for a little time from the tumults which his preaching had created.

The visit of Paul to Athens occurred while he was upon the second of his missionary journeys. He arrived not far from November 1, probably in the year 51, and stayed there perhaps a month or six weeks. His being there would seem almost an accident. He seems to have come to Athens with less of purpose, and to have wrought with less of direct method than was his custom; indeed, it hardly seems to have been for the sake of the work he might do in that city that he was there. He had been to Philippi and had been beaten and imprisoned; he had preached in Thessalonica and had escaped from the ensuing tumult in the night; from Thessalonica he had gone

to Berœa, where his work, though sufficiently encouraging to warrant the continued labor of Timothy and Silas, encountered opposition which resulted in Paul's departure from Berœa and his coming to Athens. He appears to have left Berœa without any very definite plan, except to get away from Berœa to some spot where he might wait for Silas and Timothy to finish their work and join him in labor elsewhere. If he had chosen a destination, it was probably Corinth. To Athens he was conducted by faithful brethren from Berœa, apparently out of consideration for the Apostle's defective vision and feeble health, which made him always reluctant to be alone. These brethren, having found him a comfortable lodging at Athens, returned at once to Berœa. We are able to detect here the uncertainty of Paul, and some apparent changes of plan. By the time he had reached Athens, his need of Timothy and Silas, his reluctance to be left alone, and some hastily formed plan for work, possibly in Athens itself, prompted him to send a message by the returning Berœans, instructing Silas and Timothy, to leave their work at Berœa and join him immediately. A few days later, discouraged by his own failure in Athens, he left the city prematurely,

PAUL PREACHING ON MARS' HILL

apparently sending to his companions as he was leaving a message involving a further change of plan, informing them that they were to meet him, not in Athens, but in Corinth, but that Timothy must first go to Thessalonica, where his work had been so abruptly cut off, to establish the converts there.

By adding to the narrative in Acts the statements that creep out in the first of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, written only a few months later, we are able to follow quite closely Paul's train of thought in these days. He remembers keenly the shame of his experience at Philippi (1 Thes. ii. 2); he recalls the promising beginning of his work there (i. 5-8); he seems to himself to have been baffled by Satan (ii. 18); he fears that all his labor there has been in vain (iii. 5); the possible power of idolatry to tempt his converts back into idol-worship grows upon him as he sees Athens wholly given up to it. At last, with an anxiety and affection that he can no longer control, and at cost to him of loneliness and self-denial, he sends word to Timothy to delay his coming to Paul's relief and go first to Thessalonica again.

> Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone; and sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith. (1 Thes. iii. 1-3.)

Not till Timothy joined him at Corinth, bringing an encouraging message from Thessalonica, did Paul's cloud lift. Now, alone in Athens, it was at its blackest. Recalling the memories of sorrows just

passed, he tells the church with which he next labored that his flesh had no rest—without were fightings, within were fears; he was troubled on every side.

But when Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought us glad tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you; for this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. (I. Thes. iii. 6-8.)

"For now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord!" During the time that he was in doubt on this point, he hardly seemed to himself to live. Picture to yourself the Apostle as he appeared in Athens, lonely and sick at heart and suffering in body and mind. See him as he wanders about his thoroughly uncongenial surroundings, almost broken down by his anxieties and cares. He is troubled by his imperfect vision; troubled with the reaction of an active man in enforced inactivity amid strange scenes; troubled for his companions, whose voyage if deferred may be a perilous one—it is late in the season for navigation, and Paul knows well the "perils by water"; troubled for the work which he has left incomplete; troubled with the memories of hardship and opposition—strife at Berœa, hard work and peril at Thessalonica, stripes and imprisonment at Philippi—and no man ever lived more keenly sensitive to opposition and unkind treatment than Paul; troubled for the future, for himself, for his work, which he was unable to

plan for as he wishes, for his message, dearer to him than life, yet meeting with so unfavorable reception; "troubled on every side," as he tells us, he wanders about the city, reads its inscriptions, standing near and shielding his weak eyes from the light, gazes on its idols—and at this time it was said that one might sooner meet a god than a man in the streets of Athens—and with sorrow kindling into indignation notes the combination of literary and æsthetic culture with spiritual degeneracy that everywhere forced itself upon him. He was in the home of Greek poetry and art and philosophy and eloquence, with the zenith of its glory past, and what had been a keen intellectual activity settled down into a shallow curiosity, and a spiritual torpor which tolerated all religions and gave little energetic faith to any. Many have thought that Paul's hearing in Athens on the Areopagus, where was held the supreme court, was a trial; but there was not enough of moral earnestness in Athens to produce even a heresy trial.

At last Paul attracted the attention of the philosophers, and these grew so curious in their questions that they drew Paul into the Areopagus.

It used to be supposed that Paul stood up "in the midst of Mars' hill," but scholars now tell us that while the court was accustomed to meet there for formal trials, the name of the hill, Areopagus, was commonly applied to the members of the court as well as to the hill on which they held their meetings; and that it would not have been likely that they would have taken him to this rather remote place of formal assembly. But certainly they may have done so, and

there seems no improbability that this is what the word means. In any case Paul stood before the philosophers who composed the high court of Athens, and there is no reason why the discussion, perhaps lasting several days, led finally up to this climax, that one day the philosophers actually drew him into the stone semi-circle on the top of Mars' Hill itself, under the very shadow of the Parthenon.

This is how it happened. Paul, when he arrived in Athens had Timothy with him; but soon sent Timothy away to learn how the Christians they had left behind were getting on. Left alone in Athens, and making few friends, he waited for the Sabbath day. It was not a Jewish city, but there were some Jews there, and Paul learned where they were accustomed to worship.

Paul sought out the synagogue, and there talked with the handful of Jews who gathered there. He does not appear to have preached—he conversed with those who assembled there. Carrying on the conversation as they came out of the synagogue into the market-place, they attracted more and more attention from those who chanced to overhear them, the group constantly increasing in numbers and dignity. Athens was a university town, full of philosophers, and grammarians, and teachers of rhetoric; full of students, and sciolists, and faddists, among whom a new sensation spread rapidly.

It was here, on Mars' Hill, the Areopagus, that Paul's memorable sermon was delivered. The highest court in Athens, which was held here, had had before it many noted men. Although Paul was not on

trial, but was treated with most polished and ironical politeness when requested to speak of his new religion, his hearers probably sat about upon the seats of the judges, and he may well have stood where Socrates had taken his place four hundred years before, when heard as Paul was now heard upon the same charge—that of setting forth strange gods. His sermon was short, and to the Apostle its results were not at all satisfactory.

How ought we to think of God? This was the question that Paul undertook to answer from truth held in common by himself and his audience. Whatever the origin and purpose of the altar to which Paul referred, some there must have been of those who worshipped there who looked with a purblind faith to a God above all the gods about them as yet to them unknown. Some of His attributes, Paul tells them, are known to them, and bestowed by them upon Jupiter. More than one of their poets—Hesiod, Pindar, Lucretius—had set forth more or less clearly, His paternity of mankind. Especially had Cleanthes and Aratus, nearly contemporary poets of the third century B. C., expressed this idea. From the latter of these two Paul seems to quote. In the beginning of his work on Astronomy, are these lines:

From Jove we sprung, whom we mortals should ne'er
Leave unsung. Of Jove the public walks are
Full, and councils all of men: both the sea
And shore are full of him. From Jove comes all
That we enjoy; for we are his offspring.

These words from a heathen poet Paul took as his

text; and for his theme he took an altar which he had seen, erected "To the Unknown God."

Who erected that altar? What did he mean by it?

Perhaps it was erected by some very misguided heathen who were afraid lest with all their gods, they had omitted one. Perhaps it was the work of some devout men whom idol-worship did not satisfy, who felt that still the true God had not been found through the worship of images.

Paul did not speak of it harshly. He began by assuming that the altar showed that the people were religious; and since the altar was a confession that God was not known, he was at liberty to tell them about God.

The sermon Paul preached that day is one of the most notable sermons ever preached. This is the story as Luke learned it afterward from Paul and wrote it down:

And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,

Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To an Unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of

men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again. Thus Paul went out from among them. But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.—(Acts 17:22-34.)

The shallow, critical interest of his hearers soon broke out into open contempt. Only one of the influential men who heard him was converted; the rest refused to hear him through. Ridiculed and mocked (and Paul could endure even beating better than ridicule), with another weight added to the burden he was bearing, he left the city. He cherished no pleas-

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PAUL AT ATHENS.

ant memories of his stay there. He wrote no epistle to the church there. He never visited the place again, though more than once he might have done so. More than likely he thought his effort there a complete failure. But a little church grew up there, and in time the Parthenon itself was re-dedicated as a Christian church; and in the Christian schools of Athens were trained bishops, and apologists, and orators, and martyrs of the Christian faith. In the sixth century, Minerva, for whom the city was named, was supplanted in popular affection by Mary, the mother of Christ. The "weak-eyed little fanatic," with his strange religion, was less than a nine-days' wonder in Athens; he was soon forgotten in the search for a new sensation; but men visit Athens less to-day to see where Socrates taught, and Plato reasoned, and Solon made laws, and Pericles ruled, and Demosthenes poured forth his mighty torrents of eloquence, than to stand where Paul stood on Mars' Hill and preached his two-minute sermon to a listless and mocking audience. A heathen altar was his theme and a heathen poet furnished him his text; and his sermon stands, unique, a model of polite and logical argument, and a sententious presentation of significant Christian truth.

Paul's argument is a noble one. If we are the children of God, God must be like the best that is in us. We must never think that God is anything grotesque or hateful, as many idols were; we must never suppose Him arbitrary or revengeful or partial, or anything that would be unlovely in ourselves. We must never make creeds or other graven images of

such sort that they limit our knowledge of God or our love for Him. God is like the best that is in us, only God is vastly better.

ARATUS, THE GREEK POET

How did Paul come to Athens?
What was the condition of Athens in Paul's day?
Where is Athens?
What had been its glory?
How much of that glory now remains?
How much of it remained in Paul's day?
On which of his missionary journeys did Paul visit Athens?
About what year was it?
Who were with him?
Whom did he leave behind?
For whom did he send?
What do we know of his state of mind?
How do we know this?
What did Paul see in Athens?
Whom did he meet?
Where did he preach?
To whom did he preach?
What famous court was held in Athens?
What did Paul preach about?
How ought we to think of God?
What Greek poet did Paul quote?

What truth did he teach?
Who taught this same truth more beautifully?
What was the effect of Paul's sermon?
Did Paul leave with pleasant memories?
Did his sermon do any good?
What have you learned from this story?

CHAPTER XXII

THE TENT MAKERS

CLAUDIUS, the emperor, could be a staunch friend, as Herod Agrippa had reason to know. The emperor had made it possible for Herod to become ruler of the Jews, and more than that, he helped him to hold onto the throne when once he had it. He assured him help in time of trouble, and he gave him two new provinces, Samaria and Judea. These two men were very good friends. Herod occasionally went to Rome to talk over matters of state with the emperor. For the first eight years of his reign, Claudius treated the Jews in Rome very nicely. He was interested in them for his friend's sake. He overlooked several small insurrections, which troubled his cabinet of advisers not a little. For over a hundred years the Jewish colony in Rome had been stirring up strife. The police of the city watched them constantly. The Jews had never learned how to adapt themselves to the Romans, nor how to mingle with them. The two nations did not mix. The result was constant small revolts among the Jews. As a favor to Herod, Claudius had overlooked the trouble during these eight years. He had

not given the matter much thought, as he had been so absorbed in the progress of the fine new harbor he was building for Rome, and in watching his great aqueduct go up.

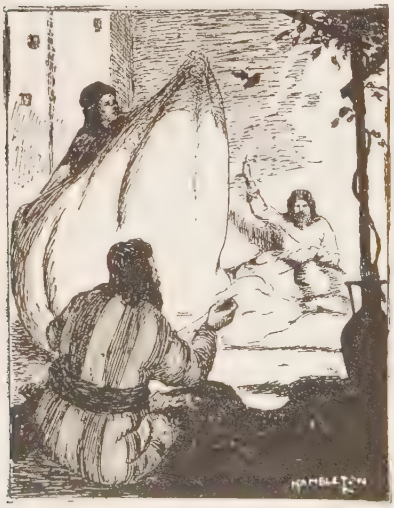
The crisis came in 49 A. D., when the Jews in Judea broke out in fierce revolt against the Roman Government, and terrible conflicts took place between the Jews and the Roman soldiers. Claudius could no longer overlook the trouble at home. The Jews in Rome had to be reckoned with. Finally in the year 49 A. D., Claudius was forced to drive them from the city.

Among the Jews who left Rome at this time were a man and his wife, Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila was born in Pontus on the Pontus Euxinus, and had somehow found his way to Rome, while he was still a young man. During the reign of Claudius, in fact, ever since Pompey had brought in the first Jewish prisoners, Jews had been flocking to Rome. No doubt Aquila fell in with some of them bound for this great city, and became enthusiastic to see this world capital.

We have to depend entirely upon tradition for the early life of Aquila. We can believe that soon after he landed in Rome, he met Prisca, Priscilla as her more intimate friends called her. She belonged to a distinguished Roman family. She was full of life and enthusiasm, and prominent for many lines of work. At the time when Aquila came to Rome, she was an active member of the Christian Church. He, too, soon came to take active interest in the new religion so that their work often brought them together. We know nothing more about this period

of their lives, except that they were married, several years before they had to leave Rome. The edict, which drove them from home, was no doubt more of a trial to Priscilla than to her husband. She had grown up in this city, and all her friends and interests were here. But Aquila had traveled a long, long way before he landed in Rome, so that perhaps he was rather glad to set out again. He took Priscilla back to Corinth, across the Adriatic Sea. Here he found her a little home, not so different from the one they had occupied in Rome.

The Jewish law required every father, no matter how rich, to teach his son a trade. Each boy must know how to do something useful with his hands, such as wood-carving, carpentry, weaving or other crafts. Aquila was by trade a tent-maker. It was his business to weave a hard water-proof canvas out of goat's hair. From this material he made tents of every form and shape. Part of his time was spent in mending or repairing the worn-out tents brought to him. His work kept him busy for long hours of the day, but he enjoyed it, for the exercise was healthy and kept him out of doors.



THE TENT MAKERS

Priscilla, no doubt, had more time than her husband to help with the work of the Christian Church at Corinth. She was soon a prominent member of this new community, and well known among a large circle of friends. Instead of referring to them as Aquila and Priscilla, as we say John and Mary, or Mr. and Mrs. Smith, the people unconsciously came to put Priscilla's name first. Perhaps they sometimes spoke of Aquila as the husband of Priscilla, for the reason that they knew her better. She took hold of everything the people were trying to do at Corinth, with the greatest enthusiasm. She and her husband had such good ideas about the work that people soon came to depend upon them for a great many things. Their advice was sure to be sound.

One day a wonderful thing happened in Corinth. When there were no railroads, no newspapers, no telegraphs, news traveled very slowly, and the most surprising things happened quite unannounced. This was just what took place in Corinth at a time when people least expected it, because for a long time things had been moving along calmly and peacefully. In our own cities we know about everything before it happens. If a great speaker or singer is coming to town, the bill-boards picture it or the newspapers headline it long beforehand. No one would expect to keep the secret. Every time the great man took off his hat, the fact would be recorded by some reporter. So it is hard for us to realize how in Corinth each man is his own reporter, and how a great man might come to town quite unannounced. Thus it happened that Paul, the wonderful preacher, ap-

peared in Corinth this day to the surprise of all the Christians. The people could hardly believe their ears when they heard that Paul, the great preacher, had actually been seen in their town.

Many a ship had brought news about Paul. He was a great man and much talked about, even before he became a Christian. He was the kind of man that was sure to be heard from, no matter what kind of work he undertook. He was a man of remarkable force and energy, with will power to carry out his plans. Everything which he did was sure to count. When he was very young, he had learned the tent-making trade. Then he went to college at Jerusalem, because he meant to be a priest or rabbi. He studied, as he did everything else, with untiring energy. He was noted for the high grade of his scholarship.

After his college days he left Jerusalem for a while, but came back to find that a new religious sect, the Christians, were causing the authorities a great deal of trouble. With characteristic zeal he set to work to put down the Christians. He conscientiously believed that they were opposed to the true faith. After his part in the stoning of Stephen, he was called to the Sanhedrin, where he continued the work he was so determined to accomplish. What he did, he did with his might. When he had driven the Christians from Jerusalem, he even followed them into other towns, where they were preaching. It was on one of these journeys, he had the wonderful vision which put an end forever to all his persecution of the Christians. For three days he was blind and touched no

food. At the end of that time he had become a Christian himself.

It is hard to picture what consternation this new convert stirred up at Jerusalem. The authorities had left all the responsibility to Paul. It was not necessary to give the matter another thought, when once they had interested him in blotting out the Christians. They could count on him to do the work alone. When he came back from this journey a Christian himself, they refused to believe the story. They thought he had gone crazy.

The conversion of Paul was a wonderful thing to the Christians. It gave them new courage. With Paul for leader, they were ready for any conquest. Paul, too, could do nothing half-heartedly. He started in to work for the Christians with even greater force than he used to work against them. He was never tired, almost never discouraged. He inspired everyone he met with some of his own enthusiasm. When he talked, people listened to him spellbound. The force of his personality, his sincerity, his earnestness, spoke for him. He talked with such wisdom and so convincingly, that people heeded what he said in spite of themselves. He was pointed out, everywhere, as a great man, even by many who thought him unjust or misled.

This explains briefly, why the coming of Paul was such a great event in Corinth. The important question, for the moment, was, where should he stay, while in Corinth. Many people were eager to entertain him, but it was most natural for them to think of Priscilla and Aquila first. So Paul went to live at

their house. He was a tent-maker, too, and the two men worked together every day. How proud Priscilla must have been to entertain this great man, to have him at her table, working all the week on the tents together with Aquila, and preaching on Sunday in the synagogue. It meant even more to her than she realized to have this opportunity to know Paul so well. She learned more than she ever realized from this great man.

Every Sabbath Paul preached in the synagogue to the Jews and the Greeks, and he had a great many converts in Corinth. He talked to these people so fearlessly, and pointed out the truth so clearly that they were amazed, and believed what he said. Even the chief ruler of the synagogue was converted. For a year and a half he worked with them. Then when his work was done he went on to Ephesus, taking Priscilla and Aquila with him. He could stay here only a short time, but he had such confidence in his friends that he left them to carry on the work for him.

Soon after Paul set out for Cæsarea, a Jew from Alexandria, Apollos, found his way to Ephesus and began preaching in the synagogue. The story of Christ had found its way as far as Egypt, but imperfectly, so this man knew of Christ only in part. But Priscilla and Aquila invited him to live with them, so that they could teach him many things which they had learned from Paul. Then he, too, became a great preacher and had many converts. Wherever they went, Priscilla and Aquila had many friends. They were loyal and enthusiastic, eager to help, and quick to see what they could do. Their work was all

done quietly, they never taught in public, yet their influence was, no one knows how far-reaching. They were sympathetic and earnest. Their doors were always open both to strangers and other Christians. Paul counted them among his most faithful workers. Their house was a gathering place for Christians wherever they went.

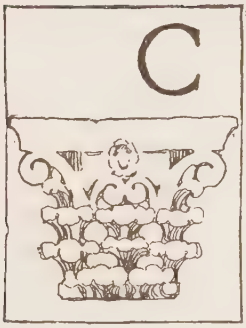
No man could have better friends than Paul had in Priscilla and Aquila. If he needed them in Ephesus, they went with him; when he went on to Cæsarea they stayed behind cheerfully to do the work he left for them. In a letter to the Romans, he tells that they risked their own lives for him (Romans 16: 3-4). And later still they were in Rome, faithful there as elsewhere.

QUESTIONS

Who was Claudius?
How did he treat the Jews?
Who was Aquila?
Where was he born?
Who was his wife?
What was their trade?
Who came to visit them?
What was his trade?
How long did Paul live with these friends?
Who else came to live with them?
What do we know about Apollos?
Where did Priscilla and Aquila afterward live?
Where do we last hear of them?
Were they still faithful?

CHAPTER XXIII

LIFE ON THE ISTHMUS



ORINTH, to which Paul went on his departure from Athens, was situated on an isthmus, and was considering the digging of a canal. A town under those conditions becomes a very interesting place, as all of us know who have read about the work at Panama. They talked about the Corinthian canal long before they dug it. Even before Paul's day there had been two or three attempts to dig a canal, but they had been abandoned. Now the news went out that the work was to be resumed; and it was resumed in the reign of Nero. Everyone was talking about it when Paul arrived there. But this attempt, too, was abandoned. It was not till 1881 that the work was undertaken on a large scale, and it was completed in 1893.

The isthmus is only four miles wide; and in the days when Paul was there, many small vessels were put on wheels and rolled across the isthmus rather than sail around, especially in stormy seasons.

Corinth was in many respects the most interesting town in the world. It was rich, and made up of many kinds of people. There the forms of Greek archi-

tecture reached their most elaborate form in the type called Corinthian. News and people easily reached Corinth; and the city with its two harbors, and a foot in either sea, was a great commercial center, and a

THE BEATING OF SOSTHENES

place of intense life. It was a wicked city, but it had many good people in it, and these were the more earnest because they grew strong in opposing the evil about them.

Corinth was a place noted for its games. Almost every Greek city had outdoor sports; but Corinth had a great open-air stadium, and was one of the four principal sporting centers in Greece. The place where these games were played was only a short distance northwest from the city, and Paul doubtless visited it at different times while he lived in Corinth. His letters written after this have many references to the sports. He could have seen these in any Greek city; but he is almost certain to have seen them while he was in Corinth.

Paul had a notable convert in Corinth, Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue. He became the friend of Paul, and joined him in leading the movement for the religion of Jesus. This must have given Paul great fame in Corinth; for, while the Jews were not very popular, there were a good many of them, and they all must have known that the ruler of the synagogue was a convert. Crispus became a very ardent Christian and the Jews elected a new ruler of the synagogue.

Paul made many friends in Corinth. There was an influential man named Gaius, in whose house Paul lived for a time, so that when he wrote one of his letters he told of "Gaius, my host"; and there was another man named Stephanus, whose family he afterward remembered with interest. And there was another household of which we have said more in a previous chapter, that of Priscilla and Aquila. So it is good to know that Paul found pleasant companionship.

But this is not the only thing to be remembered

about Corinth. It became one of the most important places in the story of early Christianity.

One very important thing happened soon after Paul had left the synagogue and hired a separate place of meeting. He saw a vision of the number of good people in that wicked city, and received the assurance that he could speak with boldness and without fear.

His experience in Europe up to this time had been so sad a series of persecutions and imprisonments and disappointments, Paul must have rejoiced that at length he had assurance of comfort. This was the first vision he had, so far as we know, since he saw the man of Macedonia. He had searched through Macedonia and come to Achaia, and if he had accomplished any great thing he could not feel sure of it. Now he felt sure that he was in a place where he had a work to do and that he could do it without fear. And he settled down, for the first time in his missionary journeys, to a long residence in one city to do a great work. So he lived and taught there a year and six months. It was a very interesting period. Hundreds of people were converted, not only Jews but Gentiles; and Paul devoted himself more to work among the Gentiles than he had ever done before.

Paul did not escape arrest in Corinth, but his arrest was very unlike what had happened in other cities. The pro-consul before whom Paul was tried was Gallio, a brother of the famous philosopher Seneca. Seneca was the tutor of Nero, and his writings are preserved. There are some things in them which scholars have thought showed that Seneca and Paul

were acquainted, and it has been thought that possibly Paul's meeting with Gallio might have become the occasion of Seneca's interest in the Christians. We do not know. But we do know that Paul's trial before Gallio was an exceedingly important event.

Gallio was a new man in the office of pro-consul, and he became sick in Achaia, so that he later took a sea-voyage for his health and returned to Rome. His lungs were affected, as we know, at a later period, but he may have been in good health when Paul stood before him.

When Gallio came as pro-consul, and while he was new to the office, the Jews, angered by the conversion of Crispus, had Paul arrested, and the new ruler of the synagogue, Sosthenes, appeared to accuse him. Paul determined not to be imprisoned again if he could help it, and undertook to defend himself. But before he could open his mouth, Gallio dismissed the case. He said that if Paul had been accused of any crime against the Roman law, he would hear the case, but that if it was merely something that concerned their law, they should settle it among themselves, for he would have nothing to do with it. And he turned them out of court.

A crowd of curious people were there to hear the case; and when they saw Sosthenes angry and defeated, they turned upon him with rude jokes and pushes, and actually beat him before the judgment seat. Gallio did not interfere, counting a mere scuffle unworthy of the notice of his court. This is the way Luke told of it:

"But when Silas and Timothy came down from

Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city. And he dwelt there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

"But when Gallio was pro-consul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment-seat, saying, This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villany, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these matters. And he drove them from the judgment-seat. And they all laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things." (Acts 18:5-17.)

We do not know that any of the Christians beat Sosthenes, and we hope not. But Sosthenes deserved a beating, and it was a wholesome warning to those who were disposed to persecute the Christians. For the first time they stood by and saw their own enemies beaten, and it was a very different experience than those to which they had been accustomed.

After that, no one thought of arresting Paul, lest he share the same fate. And Paul preached with all his might. The church at Corinth grew. It was a turbulent, heterogeneous church, with many kinds of people in it, but it was free from persecution, and it was full of life.

From this time on Paul moved in a larger orbit, and his plans grew greater. He now found what he had come to Europe to accomplish, and as he heard from the churches in Macedonia, he found his work there had not been a failure. Indeed, his year and a half at Corinth was the most prosperous period he had known.

So Paul returned again to his friends in Antioch. But before we go there with him, let us remember some things more about his life in Corinth. We want a nearer acquaintance with some of his friends, and we must remember one entirely new kind of work which he there began.

QUESTIONS

What is an isthmus?
What famous isthmus have you heard about?
Why do men dig a canal across an isthmus?
Have you ever heard about the Panama canal?

Do you know about the Suez canal?
Where is the isthmus of Corinth?
How wide is it?
Was there a canal there in Paul's day?
Were they planning for one?
What did ships do when they came to Corinth?
For what was Corinth noted?
Was it a good city?
Have you heard of the Corinthian games?
Were there any Jews in Corinth?
Where did Paul first preach?
What noted convert did he have?
Who was afterward his host?
Were many people converted in Corinth?
Why was Paul arrested?
Who acted as judge?
What did he decide?
What happened to Paul's accuser?
What occurred afterward?
Where did Paul go from Corinth?

CHAPTER XXIV

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT BEGAN

DURING most of the time of which we have been telling, no part of the New Testament was in writing. Mark wrote his Gospel many years after this, and the other Gospels were still later. Down to the time of Paul's second missionary journey there probably was no part of the New Testament in writing, unless it was the letter of James. But while Paul was at Corinth something happened of great importance.

Paul had waited in Athens for Timothy; but, when Timothy arrived, Paul was so anxious about the converts whom he had left behind, and whom he could not visit, that he sent Timothy straight back to see how they were getting on.

After a while Timothy returned from Thessalonica, and joined Paul in Corinth; and Paul plied him with questions about the people of Thessalonica. Were they standing firm in the faith? Did they continue to serve God after the Apostle had left them?

To Paul's great joy, Timothy assured him that the disciples in Thessalonica were standing firm.

Paul's heart gave a great leap of joy. He had

suffered so much for those people; he had been whipped and imprisoned for them; he had left home and country for them; he had feared it was labor thrown away. He felt that it added years to his life to know that these friends were faithful. "For now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord!" he cries.

So delighted was Paul with what Timothy told him, he sat down and wrote, or perhaps dictated, a letter to the church of Thessalonica, and sent it there from Corinth. It was the first of many letters that he wrote, and he wrote it in joy. Let us read a part of that letter, and remember in what spirit he wrote:

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father; knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election, how that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake. And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit; so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so

that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it hath not been found vain: but having suffered before and been shamefully treated, as ye know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God in much conflict. For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts. For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness. God is witness; nor seeking glory of men, neither from you nor from others, when we might have claimed authority as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children; even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe: as ye know how we dealt with each one of

you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory.

But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence not in heart, endeavored the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire: because we would fain have come unto you, I Paul once and again; and Satan hindered us. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy.

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone; and sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no man be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed. For verily when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause I also, when I could no longer forbear, sent that I might know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor should be in vain. But when Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought us glad tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you; for this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we render again unto God for you,

for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith.—(I Thessalonians 1-3.)

What a flood-tide of affection and of pent-up joy bursts forth in this letter! Can we make ourselves understand out of what a heart of love Paul wrote it?

He went on to write of some doctrinal matters, though not at any great length, and ended his letter with personal greetings and admonitions and encouragements:

But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all. See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward. Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.

Brethren, pray for us.

Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.—(I. Thessalonians 5:12-28.)

Soon after Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians he wrote another, from the same place to the same church. Silas and Timothy were still with him, and the letter was really a sort of postscript to the first one.

PAUL DICTATING HIS LETTERS

He heard that some people had misunderstood the doctrinal part of the first letter, and thought the coming of the Lord was very near, and this was leading them into error. Moreover, he was afraid, for some reason, that letters, which were not his would be circulated as from him, and he wanted to let his friends know that even the letters that he might dictate would be signed with his own hand. Also he had heard some things which made him anxious about some disorderly persons. So he wrote another letter, still happy, though a little less exultant than the other.

These letters were so much enjoyed at Thessalonica

that they were copied and sent to Berœa, to Philippi and, in time, to other churches. The brethren read them over and over, and were glad, not only of Paul's personal salutations, but also of what he taught them. And Paul constantly heard how greatly his letters were prized. So later he wrote more of them, and these also were copied and sent out to other churches, and the larger churches came to have several of his letters, and to read them regularly, lest they forget.

These first two letters are the most personal and the least doctrinal of all Paul's letters. His later ones are more and more taken up with the lessons he had to teach. But all his letters have some doctrine, and all have some personal greetings.

QUESTIONS

What was the Bible used by the first disciples?
How was the story of Jesus preserved?
Who were the first to tell it?
How did the New Testament begin?
What book was written first of all?
Who wrote it?
Why did he write it?
What is this book about?
Who were with Paul when he wrote this letter?
What was the next letter Paul wrote?
To whom did he write?
Why did he write?
How did Paul end his letters?
Have you read these two letters?
How did the churches regard these letters?
How did the collection of letters begin?

CHAPTER XXV

A LETTER FROM A BROTHER OF THE LORD

VERY little appears in the Bible narrative concerning the other children besides Jesus in the home of Joseph and Mary. There were at least seven children all together, and Jesus was the eldest. The brothers were named James, Joses, Judas and Simon. There were at least two sisters. These were the playmates of Jesus in the home in Nazareth. For every one of these He cared, as their elder brother.

While Jesus was alive, His brothers and sisters did not believe in Him. It seemed to them very strange that one of the brothers should be so much wiser and greater than the others. And sometimes they thought He was insane. But they followed Him to Jerusalem, and were there after His resurrection, and they remembered how kind and good He had been, and they knew He was still their friend and brother. And they loved Him, and acknowledged themselves His disciples.

When Paul was converted, and went to Jerusalem after his three years in Damascus and Arabia, one of the men he most wanted to see was "James, the Lord's

brother." He was the brother next younger than Jesus, and was much loved in Jerusalem.

It is said of him that he was a very just man, so much so that they called him, "James the Just." It is further said that he prayed so constantly that his knees became callous with kneeling.

Within ten years after the crucifixion of Jesus, James was considered the foremost of the disciples then living in Jerusalem. He had not been one of the twelve apostles, but became so very earnest that he was honored as much as they were, and sometimes perhaps even more, because he was a brother of Jesus, and because he was known to be a very good man.

James did not leave Jerusalem when the persecution rose, and he was not the James who was killed by Herod. He still was living in Jerusalem down to the last time Paul was there. And the Christians who lived there, and those who visited there, held him in very high honor.

When the Christians were scattered very widely by persecution, James wrote a letter to them. It contained much good advice about very many things. It taught Christians to have faith in God, even when persecuted, and never to say that God was tempting them. It taught them to refrain from unkindness of speech, and to show their faith by their works.

This letter from the brother of the Lord was not addressed to any one Christian. It is just as much to you and me as to any one else. We are among those who are "scattered abroad." Would you not like to receive a letter from one of the brothers of Jesus?

Here it is. Let us imagine it postmarked Jerusa-

lem, and bearing a strange-looking foreign stamp in the corner, and inclosed in an envelope addressed to yourself.

THE LETTER OF JAMES, THE BROTHER OF JESUS

Greeting.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion, greeting.

Be Patient.

Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing.

Pray in Faith.

But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways

Rejoice in Lowliness.

But let the brother of low degree glory in his high estate: and the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the grass; and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his goings.

Temptation is Not From God.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death. Be not deceived, my beloved brethren.

All Good is From God.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Be Doers As Well As Hearers.

Ye know this, my beloved brethren. But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing.

Pure Religion Defined.

If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Bridle the Tongue.

Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the im-

pulse of the steersman willeth. So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

The True Wisdom.

Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace.

Do Not Speak Evil.

Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. One only is the lawgiver and judge, even he who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor?

Life Is Uncertain.

Come now ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that. But now ye glory in your vauntings: all such glorying is evil. To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Help the Erring.

My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

Now you have read it through, and it was a nice long letter, but not so very long when we remember how much this brother of the Lord had to say to you. It was a real family letter; for you, too, are a brother of Jesus. It is written of Him and us, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

So, you see, this letter from the brother of Jesus was properly addressed to you; for you are a brother of Jesus, and of his brother, James, who writes this letter.

Jesus had another brother, who became a disciple after our Lord's death. His name was Judas, or Jude. He is commonly called by the shorter form of the name, because there were other men named Judas, one of them a very bad man.

We do not know much about this brother, except that he was very earnest and faithful. It has been thought by some scholars that he went to Egypt and wrote his letter from that country. We are not sure whether this is true or not.

QUESTIONS

Whom did Paul go to see in Jerusalem after his conversion?

What can you tell about James?

To whom did James write?

What does he say about patience?

What does he say about praying in faith?

From whom do temptations come?

Where does all good come from?

What is pure religion?

What does he teach about faith?

What does James say about the tongue?

What does he say about being peaceable?

What does he say about speaking evil?

What does he say about helping the erring?

Had Jesus any other brothers?

Have we any other letters from this family?

CHAPTER XXVI

PAUL'S MOST VEHEMENT LETTER

OW distressed we are when those we have trusted prove unworthy of our confidence. At Antioch, after his second missionary journey, Paul received news that the converts in Galatia were not standing fast in the faith. After he left, some teachers, who were Christians, but of the Jewish type, came in and taught the people that Paul was not an apostle, and that the Gentiles could be saved only by becoming Jews. Paul was indignant. He dictated a letter that was white hot with feeling, reproving the Galatians who had fallen back. He said:

I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I

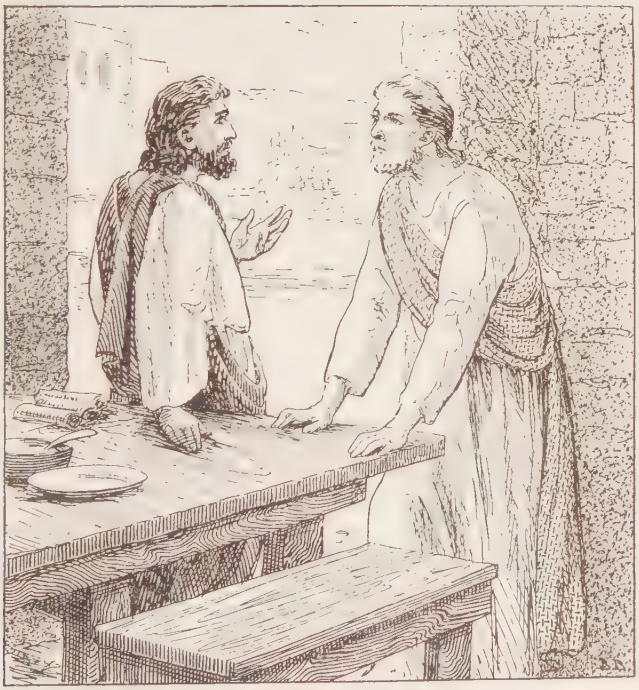
now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.—(Galatians 1:6-10.)

No, he was not seeking to please men, or he never would have written in that way. But it was the kind of letter that was needed. He then went on to tell that he had not gotten his doctrine from Peter, but that he had himself taught Peter some things, and had once reproved him. He gives us more knowledge of what he did in the years after his conversion than we can obtain in any other way; and this letter is of the very greatest value in helping us to make a life of Paul. If we read this account we see how much material there is in it for a biography:

For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them

that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things which I



"But Other of the Apostles Saw I None, Save James, the Lord's Brother."

write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa which were in Christ: but they only heard say, He

that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc; and they glorified God in me.—Galatians 1:11-24.

Paul has been writing very sternly, and he still is stern, but tender:

O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh? Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain. —(Galatians 3:1-4.)

He remembers how he was sick when he first came among them, and they would have plucked out their own eyes for him. This is one of the passages which causes us to think that Paul had weak eyes:

I beseech you, brethren, become as I am, for I also am become as ye are. Ye did me no wrong: but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first time: and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.—(Galatians 4:12-15.)

He was, indeed, perplexed about them. He could hardly understand how people who had been so kind, and whom he loved so much could have proved false.

And he besought them to stand fast in their liberty in the Gospel:

For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.—(Galatians 5:1.)

Then he exhorts them to be forgiving toward those who have committed errors and have repented; and we see how forgiving Paul himself was:

Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor. For each man shall bear his own burden.—(Galatians 6:1-5.)

He urges them to be liberal, and to give freely for the support of those who preach the Gospel, and to all men who have need:

But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not be weary in welldoing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. So then, as we have opportunity, let us work

that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.—(Galatians 6:6-10.)

All this part of the letter Paul dictated to an amanuensis. But now, as was his custom, he took the pen to sign his name. As he did so, he noticed that the writing above was clear and regular, and thought that his own would be less perfect. He wrote in larger letters than the scribe who wrote for him. But he did more than sign his name. He wrote a rather lengthy postscript with his own hand; and here it is:

See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.—(Galatians 6:11-18.)

We have reason to believe that this letter, so earnest

and at the same time so tender, had its fruit; and that the people of Galatia cherished the letter, and were true to Paul and to the Gospel.

QUESTIONS

What does vehement mean?
To whom did Paul write a vehement letter?
Why was he vehement?
What had he learned about the churches of Galatia?
Why did Paul care?
What does he tell us about his Gospel?
What does he tell about his visit to Jerusalem?
Whom did he see there?
What does he tell us about Peter's visit to Antioch?
What does he tell about the great debate at Jerusalem?
How did he preach the Gospel in Galatia?
What does he say about a yoke of bondage?
Whose yoke is easy, and burden light?
What does Paul say about forgiveness?
How did Paul sign his letters?
How did the Galatians receive this letter?

CHAPTER XXVII

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

HOME letters from one's first tour abroad are likely to be filled with interesting details which in later journeys are chiefly supplied by brief greetings and announcements of arrivals, mailed on picture postals. Paul lived before the day of picture postals. We lack many details of his third journey which are supplied to us concerning the first, and some parts of the second, journeys.

Paul's first missionary journey was an exploring expedition conducted jointly with Barnabas who seems to have been, throughout, the leading figure. The second journey was, first of all, a series of experiments, and then a conquering campaign, conducted into new territory extending through Asia Minor into Europe. It had its time of waiting and of disappointment, of uncertain planning and frustrated hopes, then its vision and its triumphant, but tearful progress, resulting in the establishment of the Church in the great centers of population and the Roman sub-capitals, in Philippi, Athens and Corinth. The third journey was unlike either of the preceding Unlike the first, it was not confined to relatively fam-

iliar and near-by regions and to preaching in synagogues of the Jews. Unlike the second, it was not a bold adventure into unknown lands. It was a tour of adjustment, confirmation, and organization. The story of its itinerary is told in a few words, and the

Paul Revisiting the Churches.

details of its occupation are to be inferred by a somewhat difficult process of extraction from the epistles to the churches which lay in Paul's route.

But let us not deceive ourselves with any idea that the journey was less important because its details are in the shadow, or that what we are able to learn about it is less interesting because it lacks some features of picturesqueness which belong to the first experiences of travel. The tourist returning from his third voyage has less to say of his travels; but what he says is of import, even as compared with the more ready narrative of the man of one journey.

The story of the journey is told in a few words in Acts 18:23. Paul "went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples." These words seem plain enough; and all the older maps made a great wide circle to the northward through Asia Minor to include the sweep of this journey. This is not the place for discussions concerning the theories and disputes to which these words have given rise. Suffice it to say, the tendency of modern research is somewhat to narrow the circle, and to confine the visits to a smaller group of churches, most of which Paul had visited before, a group lying for the most part farther south than the older theory implied.

And so it is natural to picture to our minds the contrast between Paul's previous and later visits. Then he went in as a stranger, secured a hearing in the local synagogue, was listened to with varying degrees of interest till he preached Jesus; found himself unwelcome; gathered a little group of listeners outside or in some private house; organized the germ of a tiny church; and then, perhaps hastened by persecution, and in peril of his life, went forth to an-

other city. Now he comes everywhere to an established work. Delegations meet him; homes receive him; congregations welcome him; the work is established and growing and Paul goes on from church to church, strengthened and strengthening, comforted and comforting, finding the great joy of seeing that his children in the faith stand fast in the Lord. "For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord," said Paul in the first letter preserved to us of those he addressed to the churches he founded.—(I. Thessalonians 3:8.)

And doubtless he found them so standing. Yes and no. His journey was not one of unclouded joy. We know something of his probable reception from his epistle to the Galatians, written, perhaps, just before, or in the midst of this journey. In that letter he wrote with grief and hot indignation, wondering that so soon his converts were drawn away to another gospel. Judaizing teachers had come in, subverting his teaching, impugning his motives, denying his authority, undermining the faith of his converts. Out of a soul melted with sorrow and hot with righteous wrath he poured that vehement letter. We know from his epistles to Corinth, written during this journey, what had happened there. Divisions had occurred; other teachers more beloved by some had been welcomed by those who preferred fine phrases to rugged truth; heresies and jealousies innumerable had sprung up like weeds; scandals were afloat; gossip was rife; faith clouded; love and zeal grew hot and cold by turns. With all the rest Paul himself was the subject of ungrateful attack. He was accused of blustering, of vacillating, of being no

apostle; his very self-denial was reckoned against him, as implying that he knew that he was not entitled to such support as belonged to the office of a true apostle. His defense of his apostolic title and his rebuke of divisions were imputed to him for jealousy. And Paul was a most sensitive man.

Paul had left these Galatian churches so grateful to him that they would have "plucked out their own eyes" to assist his own weak vision. He had left Corinth after the heathen court of Gallio had refused to interfere with his work, and the Christians, reacting from the cruel persecutions that had come upon them, themselves rose in a short-lived mob, and beat the Jewish rabbi before the Roman judgment seat. The work had been well rooted, and had lived down or fought down opposition, and Paul left, not in the night, but with publicity and a formal and loving farewell. He had touched at Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem, and had been importuned to stay longer, but had hastened on, promising to return. Behind him, at the close of his second journey, was a group of churches well founded, loyal, and grateful.

There the happy record ends. His arrival in Jerusalem is only hinted at, and he had no pressing invitation to remain. At Antioch he was doubtless welcome, but was not needed. And so, after spending some time, probably a winter, in the city from which all his missionary journeys were begun, he set forth on this third tour of the churches of Asia Minor, which, with the single exception of the one at Ephesus, he had not seen for about three years. And many things can happen in three years.

He "went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples." Several books of the Bible are a commentary on that one verse. It was no new enterprise. It lacked all the enthusiasm of a fresh undertaking. The illusions were all gone. The cold, bald, and often disappointing, facts were writ large all over the face of the town. It was a journey of heartache and struggle and pain; it was a journey, too, of rejoicing. He found much that saddened him, and some things that humiliated him; but none of them ever quite discouraged him. He still believed in God, and in his converts. None of these things moved him. He belonged to that heroic band which can face not only the peril of the battle without panic or flight, but can endure the long, slow march and countermarch, without faltering or falling out by the way. He belonged to the company of Gideon's diminished band, who can stand alone, each with his lamp and pitcher and trumpet, and give the battle-shout; and who afterward can do the harder thing, of pressing on, hungry, athirst, unwelcomed, "faint yet pursuing," doing all for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

So Paul went about, establishing the churches, teaching people to be faithful, loyal, trustful, and kind, and the work that he did still has great need to be done in the world.

In one way all of us are on such a journey as this. We are not called to plant churches or do notable things; but we go on our way, establishing the good work begun, and seeking to leave the path brighter where we have traveled.

QUESTIONS

What do you know about the missionary journeys of Paul?

How many such journeys did he make?

Where did he go the first time?

Who went with him?

Where did he go the second time?

In what respects did the third journey differ from the others?

What were the joys of this journey?

What were the sorrows?

What former companions did Paul remember?

What differences must he have considered?

How did Paul travel?

Where did he go?

Can you find a map and show where he went?

What does he tell us about the tour?

What letter throws light on this experience?

What does Paul tell us of the spirit in which he journeyed and taught?

Of what does he warn his friends?

Are people now better than they were in Paul's day?

Are they worse?

Why do you think so?

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN THE SHADOW OF A WORLD'S WONDER

THERE are said to have been seven wonders of the ancient world. It is hard to remember them; so some one has put their names into a little jingle which you may be glad to commit to memory; for you will hear all your life about the seven wonders of the world, and will have occasion now and then to remember what they were:

"The pyramids first, which in Egypt were laid;
Then Babylon's garden for Amytis made;
Then Mausolus' tomb of affection and guilt;
Fourth, the temple of Dian, in Ephesus built;
The Colossus of Rhodes, cast in brass, to the sun;
Sixth, Jupiter's statue, by Phidias done;
The Pharos of Egypt comes last, we are told,
Or the palace of Cyprus, cemented with gold."

There is a little uncertainty, you see, about the seventh; but no one doubts that among the seven wonders of the world should be counted the temple of Diana at Ephesus. Paul lived for two and one-half years near to this wonder of the world, and had some very interesting experiences there.

Ephesus was the capital city of Asia Minor. It is situated about four miles from the mouth of the River Cayster, and probably never was much nearer the mouth than at present, though the river now winds so far through swamps to the sea that it is hard to realize that Ephesus ever was a port of importance.

Paul at Ephesus

The silting up of the river by an attempt at the establishment of a jetty system was one of the chief causes of the destruction of the city, which now is merely a Turkish mud village, much subject to ma-

laria. A day suffices to convey one by rail from Smyrna to the poor modern town and back again, with time in the interval for a few hours' search among the excavations that have laid bare the ruins of the glory that greeted the eyes of Paul. The temple of Diana has been identified, and its sculptured fragments even now are eloquent of the power which paganism opposed to the infant faith that Paul preached. In that city, rich and populous and arrogant, Paul established himself, and for about the space of two years and three months he ceased not to declare to men the whole counsel of God.

Paul had been in Ephesus once before, as he was returning from his second missionary journey. The ship on which he journeyed landed there, and Paul preached in the synagogue, and was invited to prolong his stay; but taking his leave of them, and saying, "I will return again unto you, if God will," he set sail from Ephesus (Act 18:21), moving down the Cayster river, whose mouth even then was silting up in a way that threatened the harbor and the commerce of the city with the destruction that since has come to that once populous capital. When he returned, he came by land; but from the hills behind the city he saw, as he approached, a forest of masts on either side of the narrow and now malarial stream, and beyond its mouth the sails of vessels converging from all ports of the world.

There is no reason to suppose that the mouth of the river was very much farther inland then than it is now; but it is almost impossible for one who picks his way among the ruins that surround the modern

hamlet of Ayasaluk and looks out at the far-away sea to conceive of ancient Ephesus as a seaport. The tourist leaves his own ship at Smyrna, and comes to Ayasaluk by rail, and is wholly unprepared by his journey to think of Ephesus as a place of maritime power. Out of the detritus of time the modern excavator has brought it back to unwelcome daylight, until the great theater, in which the riot of the silversmiths occurred, and the temple of Diana, which once sheltered the image alleged to have fallen down from heaven, and various other of the notable buildings of antiquity, stand revealed in all the melancholy of their fragmentary glory.

There are no extant ruins of homes. The people of Ephesus lived in small houses of perishable material; only their gods had habitations of sculptured marble. The excavations have not brought back the glory of the past; and even the modern town has a look as of growing disrepair and decline; for the terrible malaria grows rather than decreases, and Ephesus is a desolation and a waste.

But in Paul's day it was not so; and here he established himself for a residence of more than two years. He preached in the synagogue until he was no longer welcome, and then engaged a lecture-room in the school of one, Tyrannus, where, after the manner of the Greek philosophers of the period, he talked with those who came to him, and appears, in addition, to have visited from house to house, preaching, arguing, explaining, exhorting, until there was established in Ephesus the strongest church in Asia Minor.

From there also went forth those with whom Paul

conversed carrying the substance of his teaching to other places. And it was apparent that in near-by places, which Paul did not actually visit, work was established which more or less related itself to his teaching and superintendence. Christianity began to grow popular and was invoked by charlatans; which was then, as it has ever been, at once a compliment and a peril. But the superiority of Christianity demonstrated itself, not only over the heathen faiths, but over the pretended religions that simulated its doctrine and power. Sorcerers and magicians and exorcists were rebuked, and men who had secured a living by fraud and superstition were converted. "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed" (Acts 19:20). It is a triumphant word, and behind it lies a record of heroic and patient toil and sacrifice, which, had he left no other memorial of his greatness and power, would entitle Paul to grateful and lasting memory.

All this time Christianity had no name. It was called "The Way." The Revised Version properly uses the capital initial here and in other places; for this was Christianity's first approach to a proper name of its own. The word "way" is ambiguous; it means manner, habit, custom, as well as thoroughfare. But, as used in the early Church, it meant simply "road": and so the first name which the Christians gave to their new religion, and it was a good name, was simply The Road. In Ephesus, more plainly than anywhere else, from Paul's day on through the long ministry of John in the same city, was made plain as in the prophet's vision, The Road of the Lord. It was a

highway, a Road of Righteousness, and a multitude found it and walked therein.

In Ephesus Paul first met a group of the disciples of Apollos, that eloquent young convert who later was set up for his rival in Corinth. Apollos' knowledge of the Christian life was still meager, but he had set forth with a fine enthusiasm to convert men to Christ; and had won a success proportionate more to his earnestness than to the profundity of his knowledge. Paul found his converts in need of further enlightenment, and Apollos himself had the good fortune to fall into the hands of Priscilla and Aquila, who helped him to a better understanding of the Gospel. He developed such preaching power that in Corinth many preferred him to Paul, and hurt the sensitive soul of the Apostle, first by their disregard for himself, and then by their imputing to jealousy a sensitiveness which sprang from a much more worthy motive.

The Gospel at length achieved a degree of popularity which illustrated the dangers of prosperity. It began to be known as a wonder-working power, and to be simulated for commercial ends. No age has been free from this danger since Christianity began to grow; and the danger will not soon disappear. Very possibly it is true that goodness and religion are as closely joined to commercial prosperity as is good for those who profess them. Certainly it was so in the apostolic day, as the seven sons of one Sceva learned to their spiritual profit, though to their present sorrow.

Paul had now accepted the limitations of his mis-

sion and his personality. He could not go everywhere; he could not send substitutes always; but where he could not go or send he could write. From Corinth he had written the two letters to Thessalonica; and either from Antioch, before starting on his third journey, or from Ephesus, he had written to the churches in Galatia; from Ephesus he now wrote to the church in Corinth the two letters which deal with so many practical topics, and which shed so much light on the work and manners of the early churches. Letter-writing had become a confirmed habit and method with Paul. His letters illustrate his versatility, his breadth of vision, his command of argument, his readiness in counsel, his knowledge of the Scriptures, and his capacity for inspiration. They give us also a wonderful soul-picture of the man himself, and the power through which God made him so efficient a winner of souls.

All this time Paul was learning. He did much for the church in Ephesus; we have no reason to doubt that his experience in Ephesus did much for Paul. There was a riot before he left; Paul seldom was permitted to finish a work unopposed; but the riot, while it terminated his residence in Ephesus, hastened his departure but very little; for Paul was already planning to go to Macedonia (Acts 19:21-22), and had promised the church at Corinth an early visit. In Ephesus he had matured a plan that comprehended his, as yet, most ambitious undertaking—he would visit these cities, go to Jerusalem once more, and then, "also see Rome." Paul was not always able to carry out his plans, but this one he accomplished, though very differently from the way he had hoped. He left

Ephesus in a riot; he visited Jerusalem, but was almost killed by a mob; he came to Rome, but in chains. And yet, yes and "so," even "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

QUESTIONS

What were the seven wonders of the world?

Which of them did Paul visit on his third missionary journey?

Where is Ephesus?

What kind of a city is it now?

What was it in Paul's day?

Of what district was it the capital?

Had Paul been there before?

How long did he stay there?

Where did he preach?

What kind of a school was it?

Whose disciples did Paul meet in Ephesus?

What were Paul's activities there?

Of what old friends of Paul do we hear in Ephesus?

What great plan did Paul form?

CHAPTER XXIX

THE SHORTEST LETTER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

ALL readers of this book know that the shortest verse in the Bible is "Jesus wept." And all readers know that the shortest chapter is the one hundred seventeenth psalm, which is very near to the longest chapter, the one hundred nineteenth psalm. But how many of you know which is the shortest letter in the Bible, and who wrote it? Do you think it is Philemon, or Jude, or Second John or Third John, each of which has only one chapter?

You may take your Bibles and see, if you like, which of these four is the shortest; none of them are very long. But the shortest letter in the Bible is none of these.

You will find it if you look very closely in the sixteenth chapter of the epistle written by Tertius, and the twenty-second verse.

Is it possible that you cannot find it? It is really there. Are there some of you who did not remember that Tertius wrote a book of the Bible? Then you are about to learn something. For this chapter is about the epistle Tertius wrote, which is a long and very

important epistle, and also about this shortest epistle about which we have been speaking.

This is not a sermon, but we will take a text. The text is this, "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord." So you see, there can be no doubt that Tertius did really write an epistle.

The most obdurate higher critic cannot doubt testimony like this. So please look up the epistle that Tertius wrote, and when you have found the text, we will proceed.

Meantime let me tell you how great an epistle this one is. You will not find it between Philemon and Jude; it is one of the longer epistles. Nor is it classed with the Antilegomena, if you know what that is; of no book in the Bible is opinion more nearly unanimous than concerning this.

And all admit not only the authenticity, but the importance of the work. There are whole libraries of books written about this one epistle. It has been declared the greatest literary effort of the human mind. Important volumes have been written about single verses of it. A million sermons, more or less, have been preached upon it. Calvin, Luther, Wesley, all the great leaders, have reveled in it. The New Testament contains no more important epistle. If anywhere in the Bible we have a philosophy of religion, it is in this book.

And yet is it possible that some reader is still hunting for it among the minor prophets? That is not the place to find it. You will save time by beginning with the New Testament epistles, and reading straight through till you come to it. It will not be enough

that you read the titles: you will not find it there. But, if you read the epistle itself, you will find it in the very first one, "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord." The epistle of Tertius is the epistle to the Romans.

Tertius was not the sole creator of the epistle to the Romans. Paul had a share in the work. Paul dictated it, and Tertius wrote it at his dictation. "A mere stenographer," I hear you say? Why "mere"? Is it nothing to be a stenographer for such an undertaking? But for the stenographer the epistle might never have been written. For some reason—we are not sure what—Paul seems never to have written one of his own epistles. So far as we can judge, he dictated them all. In prison he was in chains, and could not easily have written. But the epistle to the Romans was not written from prison; yet this, and others of his earlier epistles, were dictated. Whether he suffered from weak eyes or from some nervous disorder has been debated by scholars: we do not know the reason, but we know the fact; it was Paul's custom to dictate, not to write.

We do not know why, but this we know, that, when Paul was ready to write the greatest of his letters, Tertius was there. Tertius was a member of the little church in Corinth. He was a clerk or copyist of some sort, and worked on a salary. He probably was not the proprietor of a business. On the other hand, he probably was not, like some copyists, a slave. He could control his time. And one day, or several parts of days, when he had time of his own, he gave himself to the work of taking Paul's dictation; for Paul

had something that he wanted to write, and needed help.

"Of course he did," I hear you say. "Any one would be glad of such an honor." But that is just the point. Tertius had no idea that it was an honor. It was not easy to take Paul's dictation. His sentences were long and involved; his technical terms were many; it was hard work to follow his dictation. And Tertius never suspected that the letter would get beyond the people first addressed, the little congregation at Rome. If he had known how great an honor would be his, that would have spoiled it all. The gladdest moment of heaven will be that of bewildered joy when the righteous answer saying, "Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, and fed Thee?" They only did their duty, and never suspected the honor. Neither did Tertius.

I do not know what other thing Tertius might have done that day, and so cannot measure the sacrifice. It was perhaps as pleasant a thing as that which you shall next give up that you may give a holiday to the work of the church, or to the helping of some one in need. And Tertius had no more idea that the world would know it than you have. That is why the lesson is so good for you.

Paul was struggling to give utterance to the doxology with which the epistle closes. He had a thought so great he could not easily compass it within the limitations of grammatical form; even as finished it is not quite grammatical. Paul was revolving this wonderful word of benediction in his mind when Tertius said to him: "I wish you would let me write

something. There is something I shoud like to say."

"Very well," Paul may have said. "If you have any word to add, Tertius, write it down while I get this closing thought into form."

Face to face with the privilege of uttering his message, Tertius found that he had no great thoughts like those of Paul. He could not explain mysteries of law and grace. He was not a man of great mind, just a common every-day sort of man, with a task in life that offered few opportunities, if any, for greatness. But that fact did not deter him from saying what he could. He let those Romans know, and the world, that the writing of that letter had not been the paid task of a time-server, but the loving contribution of a fellow Christian. And he sent his own little message of affection along with Paul's.

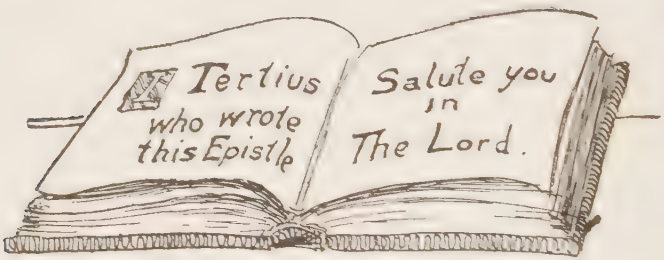
Paul has no claim to the authorship of this little epistle of eleven words. All its authorship and inspiration belong to Tertius. He was not only a stenographer, but, to the extent of eleven words, an author. Like a fly embalmed in amber, his own little epistle is preserved in that of Paul, and the letter of Paul is all the more precious because of it.

There was a third person to whom we are indebted for the epistle to the Romans. That is Phœbe. Phœbe was a member of the church in Cenchrea, near Corinth. It was her visit to Rome on business that occasioned the letter. I was not there, and have no actual report of the conversation, but I imagine it to have been something like this:

Phœbe was telling Paul about her trip, and saying how she expected to miss the church and the home

friends, and how she dreaded going among strangers.

Paul said or may have said: "You will be missed here, Phœbe. You have been a helper of many, and of mine own self also. But you will not be wholly among strangers in Rome. There are good Christians there. I will write to them, and say, 'I commend unto you Phœbe, our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints: and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.' "



I am sure Phœbe thanked him and said: "I know they will ask me many questions about you and your teaching. I am afraid I cannot tell them all they want to know. I fear I have not understood all your sermons. I wish you would write a letter to go with my letter of introduction, and tell them the things they will be asking me."

Paul may have said: "It has not been my custom, Phœbe, to write to churches that I have not founded. I have a principle that forbids my building on another's foundation. Moreover, I do not write unless I have an amanuensis."

When Paul gave that second reason, Phœbe knew that she had won the day: and she said, or may have said: "I'll go and get Tertius. All you need to do is to add a little theology to my letter of introduction."

I do not pretend to know that this was precisely the way it came about. But the greatest of human undertakings, even those inspired by the Lord, have their ordinary beginnings, and relate themselves to very commonplace events. And that would not have been either an unworthy or an improbable way for the letter to have begun. Indeed, it is evident that it was Phœbe's journey that occasioned the letter, and it was Phœbe who delivered it.

No doubt Phœbe was seasick. It was a long voyage to Rome, and a perilous one. Paul himself was shipwrecked on his way there a little later. I do not know through what perils Phœbe bore the letter, nor how her business prospered. I am sure she met the Christians, for they received the letter; and so I have no doubt they helped her. But we do not know the details. All we know is that whatever fidelity and sacrifice were necessary to the delivery of the letter did not fail. Phœbe was faithful.

Paul, Tertius, Phœbe, these are the three people who produced the letter to the Romans. And each one in his own sphere was essential to the enterprise. I do not affirm that each part was of equal honor; It is enough that each was essential to the undertaking. In this very letter Paul said, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us," and the rest. Three Pauls could not make so good an epistle as one Paul, one Tertius, and one

Phœbe. Three times Paul set forth this doctrine with great emphasis, once in Romans 12, again in Ephesians 4, and still again in I. Corinthians 12. Paul never needed any help in composing his epistles; but he had constant need of those whose humbler, but important, service made his vast labors effective.

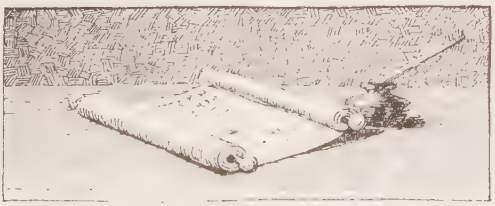
It would have amazed Tertius to know that he would be remembered for eighteen hundred years, and that his labor would be used as an illustration of fidelity. Phœbe would blush with confusion if she knew that her name had come down the ages. But both these faithful disciples of Christ by their humble and devoted efforts made their names immortal.

If Tertius could write another letter now, he might have little more to say of theology than he had before. But I imagine he would write something like this, or at least I imagine this is the message which we may read between the lines of his little epistle:

"I, Tertius, who gave up a holiday to do a humble task, and awoke in heaven with surprise to find that it had made my name immortal, salute in the Lord all whose work is humble but necessary, the toiler in the home or church whose fame comes not to public notice; and this I say to you in the bonds of the fellowship of those who perform humble tasks faithfully: Ours, too, is the glory of a share in earth's largest and holiest undertakings. In the sight of God we are partners with the greatest of earth's benefactors. Wherefore, let us, whose toil is seen only by Him who seeth in secret, work faithfully, and ours shall be a good conscience and in the end an unexpected share in the glory and immortal life."

QUESTIONS

What is the shortest verse in the Bible?
What is the shortest chapter?
What is the shortest letter?
Are you sure?
Name several Bible books which have only one chapter.
Which letter did Tertius write?
Who was Tertius?
Was it a great letter?
What do you know about it?
Did Tertius write a letter of his own?
How long was it?
Can you repeat it?
How did he happen to write it?
Who else had a part in it?
Why did Paul need an amanuensis?
Was it an honor to write a letter for Paul?
Was it easy work?
Do you do work willingly which costs you sacrifice?
What is the value of the letter of Tertius?



CHAPTER XXX

PHOEBE'S LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

PHOEBE was going to Rome on business. She asked Paul for a letter of introduction. Paul had never been in Rome, but he had acquaintances there. Priscilla and Aquila were there, with whom he had labored in Corinth. He had relatives there, Herodion, and Andronicus and Junias, and a large number of friends who were known to him by name, and to whom he was glad to send greetings. Priscilla and Aquila had organized a church in their own house. Indeed it is quite surprising that Paul knew so many people and their relations in Rome. There was one named Rufus, whose mother Paul knew, and Paul called her, "his mother and mine." Let us read the list of people to whom Paul sent greetings. Some of the names are a little hard, but the list is very interesting as showing how many people Paul could think of whom Phoebe might be glad to know:

Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: and salute the church

that is in their house. Salute Epænetus my beloved, who is the first-fruits of Asia unto Christ. Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you. Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me. Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them that are of the household of Aristobulus. Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord. Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them. Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them. — (Romans 16:3-15.)

To this long list of people, and to any others to whom they might introduce her, Paul sent a letter of introduction by Phoebe. Would it not be pleasant to know in just what words Paul wrote about Phoebe, who had been very kind to him? We are fortunate in knowing just what he said in that letter of introduction:

I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ: that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of

you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.—(Romans 16:1-2.)

Also he sent the greetings of several people who were with him in Corinth when he wrote the letter. Timothy was there, and he was staying in the home of Gaius. Erastus, the city treasurer, was a Christian, and he sent greetings. Also Paul had some cousins in Corinth, and they joined in the letter; and we already know about Tertius. This is the greeting they sent:

Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. I Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord. Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.—(Romans 16:21-23.)

Paul told his friends in Rome how often he had planned to visit them, but how he had been hindered; but that he hoped to come there on his way to Spain. How great must have been his ambition that he should now be planning so long a voyage! He must first go to Jerusalem and take a collection that had been made up for the poor of that city, and then he would follow this letter which Phoebe took, and would visit Rome. With all this in mind, Paul wrote the following beautiful little letter for Phoebe to take with her to Rome, and put it in with her own letter of introduction.

Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years

a longing to come unto you, whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judæa, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.—(Romans 15:22-33.)

But Paul did not stop with these more or less personal matters. Perhaps Phoebe asked him to write about his system of teaching. Perhaps he himself, when he once got to writing, found his heart overflowing with the truths he wanted to preach.

In this letter, which Paul sent to Rome by Phoebe, is one of the most beautiful of all the lists of tender admonitions which Paul ever wrote:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing, according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another; in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in

hope; patient in tribulation; continuing steadfastly in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—(Romans 12.)

We do not know anything about Phoebe's voyage to Rome, but we are sure she made it safely, and that she delivered the letter.

QUESTIONS

Who was Phoebe?
Where was she going?
Who wrote her letter of introduction?
Who were its first readers?
What do we call this letter?
Who sent greetings with Paul in this letter?
What else did Paul write about?
What were some of his beautiful admonitions?

CHAPTER XXXI

LETTERS TO FRIENDS ON THE ISTHMUS

DURING the visit of Paul to Ephesus he had news from Corinth through Apollos, who had lately been there and had returned to Ephesus. It was not wholly good news. The people of that town were not very stable in goodness. Desiring still the blessedness of the Gospel, they longed for the pleasures of heathenism. They did not enjoy the restrictions which seemed to be knit up with their Christian profession; they longed for earthly pleasure and amusement.

Pleasure and amusement are innocent in themselves, but if unguarded easily become a snare; and many of the amusements of Corinth were full of peril, especially for the young. So Paul learned that not all his friends in Corinth were standing fast in their faith.

While these things were in Paul's mind, a letter came to him from Corinth, asking him many questions. Paul answered these questions in a long letter, and sent it back by a committee of three men who had come to him with the letter of inquiry. We know

the names of these three men. They are written in the last chapter of the book—Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaicus. And we know that they brought a letter with questions, for Paul says, "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me," and then proceeds to answer their questions.

In Paul's letter he first greets his old friends warmly, and congratulates them on the graces and gifts which they have:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus: that in everything ye were enriched in him, in all utterance and all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.—(I. Corinthians 1:3-8.)

Then Paul begins to reprove them for the divisions which he knew were springing up among them. And he took pains to let them know that he had learned of this from some one other than Apollos or the three messengers. We do not know who Chloe was, but she probably lived in Ephesus and had been in Corinth, and Paul could name her without exposing her to unpleasant criticism. He says that he has heard these things from the family of Chloe:

Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same

thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are conten-

THE PREACHING OF PAUL

tions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was

Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?—(I. Corinthians 1:10-13.)

Then he says that as all the disciples of Jesus are working together in the building of one holy temple, each man should be sure that he builds on the true Foundation, and should build well.

But not only are we building a temple together, but each one of us in his own body and spirit is building, and is, a temple of God. We must then be very careful to keep our bodies and minds clean; for we are the living temples of God.

And now we learn that Paul had written a previous letter, which we do not have; for in the fifth chapter he says, "I wrote unto you an epistle not to keep company with fornicators." A fornicator is a person of unclean life. It may be that this had been misunderstood, and had been the reason for their writing to him. Anyway, he tells them that, while they are not to be taken out of the midst of the world, they are to live pure lives, and so far as possible to keep company with men and women of pure lives.

He answers their question whether a Christian should eat meat that has been offered to idols in sacrifice; and he says that an idol is nothing, and a Christian in buying meat need not ask whether it has been offered to idols or not; and that, in accepting an invitation to dinner, he need not go out of his way to ask troublesome questions about the source of the meat supply. But he adds that if our example in this matter can do harm to any of our weaker brethren, it is better not to eat that which can harm our brother.

He then answers the question concerning the greatest spiritual gifts. For the people in Corinth prided themselves on their gifts, and each esteemed his own gift better than his neighbor's. If a man could preach, he thought it better than to be able to sing; and he who could sing despised what he thought lesser gifts. Paul says that our various gifts are given us that we may be variously useful, and that we are not to compare our gifts in a jealous spirit, but seek, every one of us, how to use his gifts so as to benefit others. He illustrates this by showing how foolish it would be for a man's hand to despise the foot, when hand and foot are made different because of different needs, and each in its place is honorable.

A few weeks later Paul wrote another letter to his friends in Corinth, advising them to take back a man who had done wrong and whom they had expelled, but who now was penitent, and giving them words of comfort and cheer in other matters.

People had been saying that Paul did not keep his promises; that he was always promising to come, and never coming. Paul said this was not true; that he had indeed intended to come, and had been detained, but that he certainly would come. But he said that however uncertain the promises of man might be, the promises of God are sure.

And he promised that he would surely visit them, and exhorted them to be faithful till he came:

This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established. I have said beforehand, and I do say

beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, to them that have sinned heretofore, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare; seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you: for he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him through the power of God toward you. Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate. But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate. Now we pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is honorable, though we be as reprobate. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your perfecting. For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.—(II. Corinthians 13.)

QUESTIONS

How did Paul write his first letter to Corinth?
Who were with him when he wrote?
Where was he when he wrote it?
What had he heard about Corinth?

Who had told him?
Who were the men who came to him?
How does his letter begin?
What does he say about his own preaching?
What does he say about other teachers?
What does he say about our bodies?
What does he say about true wisdom?
What does he say about meat offered to idols?
What does he say about spiritual gifts?
What is the more excellent way which he tells?
What does he tell us about his plans?
What had been his motives?
Did Paul write another letter to these same friends?
What were his hopes for a visit to them?
How does that letter end?
Are not these two very interesting letters?

CHAPTER XXXII

THE RIOT OVER THE IMAGES

AUL made an important change of method when he settled down for eighteen months of steady work at Corinth. In that great commercial center he established a church which became one of the strongest in the world, and because of its favorable location people were coming to it and going from it all the time and carrying the Gospel of Christ to countless other places. The founding of this church we remember happened on the second missionary journey of Paul.

An equally important event which marked his third missionary journey is his residence at Ephesus. Ephesus was as important a city in Asia Minor as Corinth was in Greece. Paul came to Ephesus by land. It was a long journey, 412 miles north of Antioch to the Sicilian Gates, as the mountain pass was called through which he made his journey, then by a long circuit of perhaps as many more miles he came to Ephesus. All the way he stopped and visited churches and preached in various cities, but when he came to Ephesus he made arrangements to stay. For three months he preached to the Jews, but when his preaching excited opposition he withdrew, as he had done in

Corinth, and established a separate preaching place.

But it is very interesting to know that he did not have to hire a house and fit it up as he had done in Corinth. A philosopher by the name of Tyrannus had a school, and Paul rented his school house and preached there every day after business hours. These schools of Greek philosophy were common in all the cities of the Gentile world, but this is the first time, so far as we know, that Paul established a regular connection with one of these philosophical schools. A great many of the students in the school, which was a kind of college, remained to Paul's classes, and Paul was doubtless on good terms with Tyrannus, the philosopher.

When we read such things as these we see how many classes of people Paul reached on his various missionary journeys, and how wide a range was covered by his methods. Paul rented the school house for two years. For a part of the time he seems to have worked at his trade, beginning at sunrise and continuing until an hour before noon, which was the custom in that region, and during the same time from the early morning until the fifth hour, as the Greeks reckoned time, that is eleven o'clock, Tyrannus himself doubtless lectured in his school, but from eleven o'clock on through the afternoon Paul had the lecture room at his disposal, and taught and preached as he had opportunity.

We must remember that at the beginning the preaching had been entirely to the Jews, and that even down to this time of Paul's third missionary journey, his first preaching in every city was in the synagogue

if he was permitted to preach there; but we see how at Corinth and at Ephesus the separate meeting place played its important part in the life of the church. The church as a church distinct from the Jewish synagogue was making its place in the life of early Christianity.

If we could find the school of Tyrannus among the uncovered ruins of Ephesus we should think it one of the most interesting places in the world, for there the religion of Jesus gained a new place in its relation to the Gentile thinking and to the separate life of the Christian community.

When later church buildings began to be erected they were not patterned after the Jewish synagogue, but after the Gentile courthouse or basilica, and this is an interesting fact. Paul's hired house in Corinth and his lecture room in Ephesus mean as much to us in a way as the Temple at Jerusalem. The work of Christ in Ephesus grew more and more strong. Luke's word about it is this, "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

This continued for two years, and Paul was already considering the matter of leaving Ephesus, and had a definite plan that he would cross over into Greece, visit his friends in Corinth and then go through Macedonia by way of Berœa and Thessalonica and Philippi and sail to Jerusalem, but an event occurred which hastened his departure somewhat.

The great growth of the Christian faith had resulted in the burning of books of magic and the destruction of superstitious emblems. The value of those burned was reckoned and found to be 50,000

pieces of silver. That was a very large sum, and the importance of that fact to us is in showing how many Christians there must have been, for the 50,000 pieces of silver were worth not less than $10,000. In another important respect the new religion began to have its influence on the life of the Ephesians. There were hundreds of men in Ephesus who obtained a living by making little silver images of Diana. They were not beautiful images, but were believed to be copies of an image that was said to have fallen down from heaven, and very many silversmiths made their living from these images. Their trade began falling off on account of the preaching of Paul.

They had something like labor unions in those days, and the people of a given trade would get together now and then to talk about the interests of their business. One of the labor agitators of the silversmiths' guild was named Demetrius, and he called a meeting which stirred up a tremendous uproar. Luke tells about this in a very interesting way.

And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no little business unto the craftsmen; whom he gathered together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth. And ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods, that are made with hands: and not only is there

danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard this they

The Prophecy of Agabus

were filled with wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the city was filled with the confusion: and they rushed with one accord into the theatre, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel. And when

Paul was minded to enter in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain also of the Asiarchs, being his friends, sent unto him and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they brought Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made a defence unto the people. But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And when the town clerk had quieted the multitude he saith, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there who knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? Seeing then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash. For ye have brought hither these men, who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. If therefore Demetrius, and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls: let them accuse one another. But if ye seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause for it: and as touching it we shall not be able to give account of this concourse. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.—(Acts 19: 23-41.)

Of course such an event made a tremendous uproar in Ephesus, and Paul decided that it was better for him to hurry his departure a little instead of waiting until the time he had expected to leave; so Paul gathered the disciples in Ephesus together, said goodby to them and crossed into Macedonia, changing his course from what he had first expected. He visited his friends in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berœa and came to Corinth and stayed three months there, but there was a plot against him in Corinth and Paul decided to leave; indeed he had expected to leave soon in any case. He crossed to Troas in a slow sailing vessel and it took him five days to make the voyage. There he stayed a week waiting for another ship. During those days he wandered around the old city that Homer had made famous in his stories of the Trojan War, for Troas was Troy. Paul had several friends with him who had come from Greece by way of Philippi, and these held a meeting on the Sunday before Paul left. Paul preached almost all night and a young man grew sleepy because of the long sermon and fell out of the window and was thought to be dead, but Paul assured them that the young man still had life in him, and before Paul left he had the joy of seeing the young man well again.

Paul would have enjoyed visiting Ephesus on his way back, but he was in haste to get to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. The ship on which he sailed was a coasting vessel which seems to have tied up to shore every night, so Paul had time to send word to Ephesus and the Christians of that city came to meet him.

The time was in the spring, for Paul had sailed

away from Philippi at the opening of navigation at the end of the winter. Here is one of the places that we are able with reasonable certainty to figure the time of the month and the day of the week. On Monday, April 25th, they reached Mitylene; and Tuesday afternoon they anchored opposite Chios; on Wednesday morning they ran straight across to the west point of Samos, then kept in toward Miletus and here they spent several days, while Paul met his friends from Ephesus. The ship reached Coos on Monday, May 2nd; Rhodes on Tuesday, May 3rd; Patara on Wednesday, and on the 7th of May they reached the old city of Tyre, where they stayed for a week. They stayed one day in Ptolemais and on May 14th they reached Cæsarea. Here Paul left the ship and went over land to Jerusalem. He met an old friend in Cæsarea by the name of Philip, the evangelist, who had four daughters very active in Christian work, and from here he went up to Jerusalem, where he wished to arrive by Pentecost, the 28th of May.

All through this journey Paul had felt sure that he was seeing his friends for the last time, and he told them so. Plots were thickening about him, and warnings were coming to him from every side. While he was at Cæsarea a prophet by the name of Agabus came down from Jerusalem and warned Paul not to go to that city. He took off Paul's girdle and bound it around his own feet and hands and said, "Thus shall the Jews bind the man who owns this girdle if he goes to Jerusalem." But Paul determined to go; and unterrified by warnings continued his journey.

He appears to have made this trip on horseback, for the time which he allowed himself makes it quite improbable that he should have walked, and he had influential friends who were willing to care for him. His physician Luke was with him, too, and probably saw to it that Paul did not undergo any needless strain in reaching the city of Jerusalem.

Paul was mounted when he first rode forth in search of the Christians and he was mounted when he reentered Jerusalem. He had been there several times between, but usually had walked. He came knowing his danger, but he came openly and unafraid, and indeed great perils awaited him.

QUESTIONS

Where was Ephesus?
Is there a great city there today?
What was there in Paul's day?
How did Paul get there?
Where did he teach in Ephesus?
What do you know about the schools of that day?
What were the first church buildings like?
What trouble occurred in Ephesus?
Who burned the books?
What kind of books were they?
Who started the disturbance about the images?
What were these images?
Tell about the riot.
Why did Paul leave Ephesus?
Where did he go?
What old friend did he meet?
How did Paul return to Jerusalem?

CHAPTER XXXII

PAUL ARRESTED

PAUL had two great disappointments in Jerusalem. The first was when he returned from Damascus, hoping to find Jerusalem the place for his subsequent labors. He is not the only minister who aspired to preach in the city but whom God sent to the country. Paul yielded reluctantly. He reasoned with the Lord, telling how good his qualifications were for that place; he had the training, the experience, he knew the field and had an acquaintance with the necessary men and methods, and his past life was well known there, so that his work was well advertised in advance. But the Lord said, "Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles."—(Acts 22:21.)

That was long years ago, and Paul had been so nearly forgotten in Jerusalem that there was reasonable hope that he could come there with safety. He knew that there were rumors about him, some true and some false, as to his attitude toward the Jewish law, some declaring falsely that Paul taught Jews to despise their ancient ways of worship, and others reporting truly that Paul had contended earnestly for the right of the Gentiles to become Christians

without also becoming Jews. To set himself right on this matter, Paul resolved, as he had done more than once before, to avert the issue by putting himself on record before he was asked to do so.

It was customary in those days for one who had especial cause for gratitude to become, for a time, a Nazarite. Originally, as we infer in the case of Samson and others, the vow was made for life, and in the case of Samuel it was made for him before he was born. But now, and certainly as much earlier as the time of the Maccabees, it was common to make the vow for a limited period, often as short a time as thirty days, and to present one's self at the temple at the end and secure release by the offering of sacrifice and the shaving of the head. The expense of this rite was considerable, and often the man who made the vow had to look to others to release him from it, which is sometimes true of other pledges to this day, as any minister can testify who has undertaken to raise a church debt. In Paul's day it was considered so worthy a thing to make the vow that other men who had money counted it an act of piety to contribute it to the release of the temporary Nazarites. Paul undertook to do this for four men, and paid for it either with the money he had earned at tent-making or that which had been given him by the churches to defray his expenses to Jerusalem. The plan seemed to work well. The people of Jerusalem could hardly count that man a subverter of the law who was willing to pay for four men who kept the law at other people's expense; and so Paul stood in Jerusalem as the sponsor for four men whose zeal for the law had outrun

their ability to perform! Surely that ought to have secured him immunity.

And Paul would have been safe so far as the people of Jerusalem were concerned. They had no inclination to look the gift horse in the mouth, or to inquire into the orthodoxy of a man who had been gone a good while, and who had returned with a liberal contribution to the cause. But, while Paul was standing there in the temple court, advertising his orthodoxy, as it were, he was in the very place to be seen by men whom he had met in controversy in other and distant places. It was the Jews from Asia, who knew Paul's more recent record, that made the disturbance. To them, doubtless, it seemed a hollow sham that Paul, whom they knew to have instructed Gentiles not to keep the law, should be attracting so much attention as the fourfold supporter of those who kept the law almost beyond reason. Two years before this Paul had written to people in the region where some of these men came from, "I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain . . . Jerusalem . . . is in bondage with her children . . . Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing." (Gal. 4:11, 25; 5:1, 2.) There was no escape from a record such as this. Hardly anyone in Jerusalem knew of Paul's letters to his churches, but the people among whom he had been working knew very well of what sort had been his doctrine.

To all this Paul could have answered, if he had been

given a chance, that he had indeed taught Gentiles to come straight to Christ, and not to burden themselves with the law, but that he had not sought to overthrow the law for those who had been taught to love the law. But this was too fine a point for a religious mob. Paul's consistency was of too deep a sort for their perception. They only knew that he whom they had known at home as the enemy of the law had got to Jerusalem ahead of them, and that he, of all men on earth, was in the temple when they arrived, posing as a conspicuous devotee of the extreme observance of the law. It is no wonder that they were excited. Paul's influence was breaking down the old way in Asia Minor; they had come to Jerusalem to renew their faith in the rites of their fathers, and behold here was Paul! Was there no escape from this pestilent fellow? And could Paul stand for one sort of religion in Galatia and another in Jerusalem? Loud as the cry of the heathen at Ephesus these people shouted, "Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the law, and this place."

Paul got a severe beating in the riot that followed, and the temple, to which he had just made a generous contribution, shut the door behind him when the trouble arose. It would have gone hard with Paul but for the police, who arrived just when the tumult was nearing a fatal termination. As it was, he was arrested, and that was by no means the end of it. The officer was surprised to hear him speak Greek, for he had thought him an Egyptian insurrectionist, which shows how ready the police were even then to jump at an hypothesis, and follow their clew regardless of

the facts. By this time Paul must have asked himself whether it paid to go so much out of his way to convince people of his orthodoxy If he had gone quietly and alone to the temple he might have been gone from there a week before the crowd from Asia arrived. He had built up a seven-days' reputation as a defender of the faith, and lost it in five minutes under the double false accusation of being a blasphemer against the temple and an Egyptian bandit.

We do not know whether Paul acted wisely in assuming the expense of these four men who made vows at others' expense. He may have thought at the time that another time he would let such men get out of their vows as best they could, or continue to let their hair grow. But we are able to see the outcome, as perhaps he could not. He had come against the warning of Agabus, who had told him that he would be bound in Jerusalem; he had come, and had done his best to avert the calamity. He had not succeeded.

Paul narrowly escaped being murdered soon after his imprisonment, but a nephew of his, a boy in Jerusalem, overheard the plot, and told it to the jailer: and so Paul's life was spared, and he was taken out of Jerusalem by night, and saved from the murderous plots of his enemies.

In the months that followed he left no stone unturned to secure his release. He used the information of a relative, the skill which he had acquired in the Jewish law, and the right which was his as a Roman citizen. He finally appealed to Cæsar, and that seemed at the time a mistake to those who knew best: for they declared that, but for his appeal, he might

have been set at liberty. We do not know just which of these attempts of Paul to forward his work were wisely chosen and which were errors of judgment. We have no reason to suppose that God kept him free from the latter; we are not sufficiently sure of our

PAUL'S NEPHEW TELLS THE JAILER OF THE PLOT TO KILL PAUL

ground to declare that in any of these things Paul made a mistake. Of one thing we are convinced as we read the narrative—Paul was always and everywhere the brave, loyal, conscientious and resourceful servant of God, and his real consistency is most evident just where the narrow judgment of his own time esteemed him inconsistent. Throughout all these vex-

ations and dangerous experiences he was the most splendidly consistent man who handled the questions of the relations of Christianity and Judaism.

Whether Paul was always wise or not in the means he employed, we are able to trace as with a shaft of light the good that came from this disappointment. He had come to Jerusalem, saying, "After this, I must also see Rome." He saw it, as perhaps he might never have done otherwise. "And so we came to Rome," says Luke. "And so!" Not as he would have chosen, but through strife and wounds and imprisonment and shipwreck, through untold peril and toil, he achieved his long-cherished ambition.

God's ways are not our ways, but they are better. Paul probably came to Rome in the very best possible way for the work's sake; and this arrest and all the consequent sufferings were intimately related to the progress of that movement that planted Christianity at the very base of Nero's throne, and made it in time the religion of the empire. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed," said Peter. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," Paul had written already to the Romans.

A venerable tradition holds that both these stalwart men, who were not ashamed of the Gospel, met in Rome, in that place of which Hawthorne wrote, "Methinks there cannot be in the world another such an evil den, so haunted with black memories and indistinct surmises of guilt and suffering." Whether in the Mammertine, or in some other prison, however, Paul preached through his imprisonment the Gospel of Christ where most of all he wanted to preach it, and

where it took its deepest root. So later, looking back to the time of his arrest, and all that happened afterward, he wrote, "I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest." (Philippians 1:12, 13.) No wonder, then, that Paul suffered as a Christian, and was not ashamed, and Peter also glorified God in his suffering and death.

"O, God, to us may grace be given,
To follow in their train."

QUESTIONS

What was a Nazarite?
Name some distinguished Nazarites.
How had the custom changed?
What did the Jerusalem leaders propose to Paul?
What did Paul do?
How did the trouble arise?
What did the Jews from Asia Minor charge against Paul?
Were their charges true?
In what respects were they true?
In what were they false?
How did the trouble begin?
What did the temple authorities do?
Who came to the rescue of Paul?
Why was the officer surprised to hear Paul speak Greek?
Did good come of the arrest of Paul?
How did it come about?

CHAPTER XXXIV

A WINTER VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK

A MOST interesting story of a shipwreck and rescue is that which is told by Dr. Luke toward the close of the Book of Acts. It is one of the finest stories of adventure ever written. Paul had grown weary of the delay in the courts, and appealed to Cæsar, which was his privilege as a Roman citizen. This decision compelled the local judges to send Paul to Rome for trial.

Paul was sent to Rome under guard, and he was accompanied by two friends, Aristarchus, who had come to Jerusalem with him from Macedonia two years before, and Luke, his physician and secretary. There were other prisoners, but Paul was a man of distinction among them, being a Roman citizen, and a political prisoner of rank, attended by two companions. Throughout the voyage he enjoyed liberties, being permitted to visit his friends in cities where the boat stopped, and giving advice in times of uncertainty.

The captain in charge of the prisoners was named Julius, and his was one of the famous regiments, known as the Augustan band. This journey to Rome

may have been a sort of outing for him, and he and Paul were on good terms throughout. He seems to have been a gentlemanly man, who did his work faithfully and in a kind spirit.

The ships of that time were more or less rude in their build and rig. They had one mast and a large sail fastened to one very long yard. In a good wind these ships could sail about seven miles an hour. The ships had figure-heads, curiously carved, some of them being in the shape of heathen deities, and sometimes the ships were named from these.

The voyage began at Cæsarea, and it was late in the autumn. The ship was due to stop at various places along the coast and islands, and these stops are carefully described by Luke. The first day out they touched at Sidon, and Paul was permitted to visit his friends. They continued northward and then west, rounding the island of Cyprus, but encountered headwinds, and reaching Myra, on the coast of Asia Minor, they were put ashore, to wait for a through vessel, as this coasting vessel continued along the shore, or turned back.

At Myra, the captain found a ship loaded with wheat, on its way to Rome; and he secured passage for himself and his prisoners. But the weather was bad, and they made slow progress, the ship being well loaded down, and the seas heavy. They reached the island of Crete, and put in at Fair Havens.

It was now near the end of October, and the captain of the ship and Captain Julius held a council as to whether it was better to go on or to stay in that safe harbor until spring. It was a serious question whether,

with so heavy a cargo, the ship could safely go on.

Paul did not hesitate to advise them to stay; but the captain of the ship thought it would be safe to proceed, and Captain Julius was anxious to get to Rome and deliver his prisoners. So they decided to go on, though they agreed that they would have to stop somewhere on the way.

It was a pleasant morning when they sailed from Fair Havens, with a pleasant south wind, and the ship moved steadily northwest. But, before the day was over, the wind changed, and then for two weeks they had a constant battle to keep the ship afloat, and to save it from drifting onto the African shores. They got under the lee of the island Clauda long enough to take in the ship's boat, which had been towing behind, and to pass cables round the ship to protect the vessel in the double strain of the heavy cargo and the pull on the sail. Then for fourteen days and nights, with just enough sail to give them steering way, they faced the tempest. Ships in those days were steered by two great rudder-oars; and, by working hard at these, the sailors kept the vessel headed so that she rolled, broadside on, to the storm, rolling and pitching, but still afloat.

From time to time they pitched some of the cargo overboard, at times Paul and Luke and Aristarchus assisting in this task. And the coolest man on the boat was Paul. They were more ready to take his advice now than formerly, and they wished they had taken it before.

After two weeks of this constant, sleepless labor, Paul rose one morning, and came on deck with food.

No one had taken time to eat anything, except as he snatched a bite in the midst of his toil. But Paul began passing the breakfast, and, as he did so, he ate. He advised every one to cheer up, saying that while

PAUL IN THE STORM AT SEA

the ship might be lost, he was sure the passengers and crew would be saved. And finally he got them all to eating and feeling better. * * *

Night fell, and it was a starless night, and the sail-

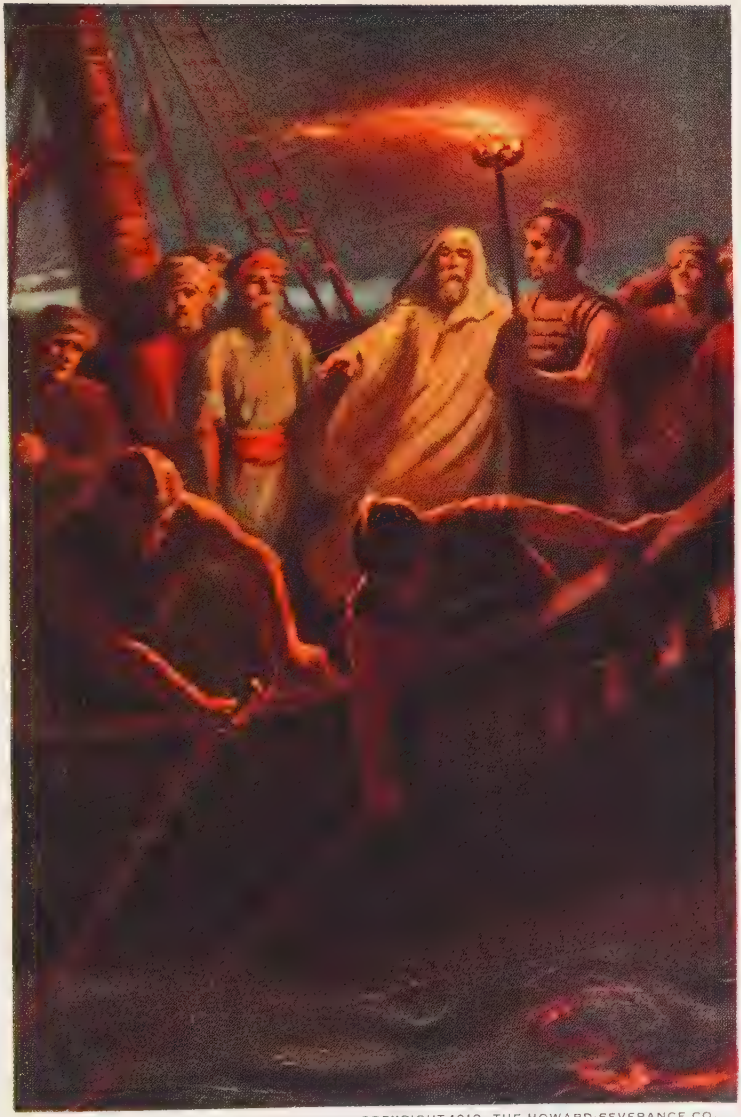
ors did not know where they were; for they had not seen the sun or stars for two weeks. But, as they sounded, they found the water getting shallow, and knew that danger was ahead. So they anchored the ship and waited for morning.

Who can describe the weariness of those anxious hours of waiting!

Early in the morning the sailors made a cowardly attempt to desert the ship. They went ahead, and pretended to be rigging some additional anchors, but really they had gotten ready the boat, and already had it over the side, intending to jump in and row ashore, and leave the passengers to their fate. It was Paul who discovered this plot, and he told Captain Julius of it, and warned him that, if the sailors escaped, the passengers would drown.

Then the soldiers rushed in and chopped off the ropes, and the boat went over the side. The sailors were angry, but they returned to their work; for now their only hope was in saving the others with themselves.

The sailors strained their eyes, and could not recognize the shore; but they saw a little creek, and determined to beach the ship there. So they and the passengers threw out the rest of the cargo, and the vessel was made as light as possible. Then they cut the anchor ropes, and let the anchors go to the bottom. At the same time they hoisted the foresail, and put their strongest sailors at the steering oars. In this way they were able to head the ship straight toward the little bay. They were not able to come as near the shore as they had hoped. The vessel struck the shore,



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THE SOLDIERS CUTTING AWAY THE BOAT.

and stuck, and the heavy waves immediately began to break up the stern of the ship.

But they were near enough for the saving of life. Every one who could swim was ordered to jump in, and make his own way to shore; and the rest were told to get hold of anything that would float, and make rafts and life-preservers.

But what about the prisoners? The soldiers said they ought to be killed, lest they escape. But Captain Julius refused to do it. The whole company owed its life to Paul, and he would not permit Paul to be harmed. So Paul got a life preserver of some sort, and jumped overboard; and while the surf was high, and the waves battered the bathers badly, they all got ashore in safety.

When they reached the shore, they all realized that the man who had saved their lives was Paul, the prisoner.

QUESTIONS

Tell how it came about that Paul took this voyage.

In what respect was this different from his three missionary journeys?

From what port did he sail?

Describe the ships of that day.

What was the course of Paul's ship?

Why did he change ships?

Who were with him?

What was the name of the captain of Paul's guard?

With what was the ship loaded?

Tell about the storm.

On what island did they land?

CHAPTER XXXV

ALONG THE APPIAN WAY

THE people on the island devoted themselves to caring for the shipwrecked passengers who had come through the wintry sea and landed on the bleak shores of Malta. Doubtless some of the sailors had been on that island before, but even if so they would hardly have felt at home in the place where they landed. However fair it had appeared to them before, on that winter morning it was bleak and cold.

Malta is an island, the largest of a group of three. On one of the smaller islands dwelt the legendary Calypso, of whom Homer sung, but Malta itself is famous in our thought as the place where the Knights of St. John afterward made their refuge and fought their courageous battles against the Saracens. It is hardly less noted as the place of Paul's shipwreck. Malta has one great harbor, Valetta, named after Jean la Valette, who commanded the Knights of St. John, but this harbor is several miles away from the Crete where Paul's ship was beached and the shore was nearly uninhabited. The old capital of the island,

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PAUL AT MALTA.

known as Citta Vecchia, is much nearer to Paul's Bay than the harbor, and there the Governor lived. He learned a ship had been wrecked and that several hundred people had come to land and he gave instructions that they should be cared for.

Among these people stranded on the beach was one who received particular honor. It happened through Paul's adventure with a snake, for while the shipwrecked people were gathering wood to put on the fire a viper ran out of the fagots that Paul brought and curled around his wrist. The people at first thought that Paul must have been a murderer whom the Fates were following in revenge, but when they saw that Paul was unharmed by the snake and that it simply curled around his hand and was shaken into the fire, they began to think that Paul was a god. This is the reverse of what happened at Lystra, where we remember that the people at first wanted to worship Paul and Barnabas, but later dragged Paul out and stoned him. At Malta they thought he was a murderer at first, but afterward thought he was a god.

Everybody began talking about Paul. They thought him a wonderful man, and when they inquired of the captain of the ship and of Captain Julius who commanded the soldiers on the ship, both of these said Paul was indeed a remarkable man. He was a prisoner to be sure, but was not charged with any crime. It was some political offense which they did not know very much about, but they did know that Paul was a man of great genius, and that he had saved the lives of everybody on board ship.

The governor, whose name was Poplius, sent for Paul, and it happened that the father of Poplius was sick. Paul came and healed him, and then the fame of Paul grew still greater.

The shipwrecked people had to spend the winter on the island of Malta, and they were very kindly treated by the inhabitants. This was partly due to the kind disposition of the people, and partly due to the influence of Paul, and the remaining months of the winter passed not unpleasantly.

After three months spent on the island of Malta, Paul and his companions took ship again for Rome. There was a ship in the harbor which had been caught by the winter and had found no favorable opportunity to proceed. It had a figure-head of the twin brothers, Castor and Pollux. They had been wrecked in November, and they sailed the middle of February. The beginning of their voyage brought them to Syracuse, but the wind fell and they had to wait for three days. When the wind sprung up again it was not from the south as they wished it might have been, but by tacking they came first to Rhegium, and after one day there the south wind for which they had been hoping sprung up and they sailed across to Puteoli on the shore of Italy in about twenty-four hours. These old ships sailed fast when they had a good wind, and sometimes they were well handled even in bad weather. After so much of bad weather and uncertainty and delay, to say nothing of the shipwreck, Paul must have enjoyed that last day's voyage with a good favorable south wind. It was about the first of March. The shores of Italy were green and beautiful; the olive

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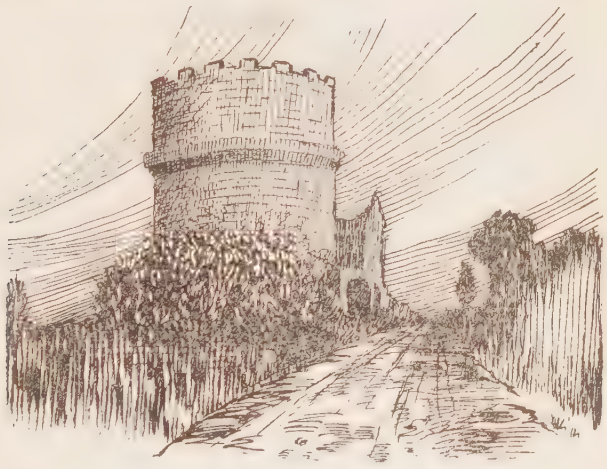
ALONG THE APPIAN WAY.

groves brightened the hillsides, and the waters of the blue Mediterranean broke in laughing ripples around the prow of the ship, and the south wind filled its sails and brought Paul on to the last stage of his sea journey to Rome.

Puteoli is the port where they landed, and they spent a week there, finding brethren by whom Paul was well treated. Word went on to Rome that Paul



The Appian Way.

was coming, and some of his friends prepared to meet him. One company came out as far as the Appian Market and another delegation was waiting at the "Three Taverns." These three groups of friends, one at the landing and two at successive stages of the journey, wonderfully cheered the heart of Paul. He thanked God and took courage.

The Appian Way was a military road constructed by the censor, Appius Claudius Cæcus, more than three hundred years before Christ. It still is in exist-

ence, and affords one of the most interesting journeys of the modern tourist in Rome. Along it lie the Catacombs, and there are ruins of the Claudian aqueduct, and ancient tombs that speak of the grandeur of the city as it was. Along this highway, now twenty-two hundred years old, Paul walked with his companions to the Eternal City.

Years before as the vision of his work grew large, he said to his friends that after he had visited all the larger capitals in order he must see Rome. Repeatedly in his letters he referred to it as the goal of his ambition. He was coming to Rome now, yet how differently from the way he had expected! Along the Appian Way Paul marched in chains, but his soul was unconquered. The military expeditions that returned to Rome were accustomed to enter the city by this thoroughfare. Some of Rome's greatest generals came in over this road, decked with garlands, and were received by open ranks of cheering crowds. Not so did Paul enter the world's capital, but with chains clanking at every step, yet of all the conquerors who ever came to the Eternal City none carried in his bosom a more triumphant heart than Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS

Where is the Island of Malta?
For what is it famous?
Who were the Knights of St. John?
What famous man visited this island?
How did he happen to land there?
What occurred after he had landed?

Tell about the fire and the snake.

Tell about the healing of the governor's father.

How long did the shipwrecked people remain on the island?

On what ship did they leave?

What was its figure-head?

What was its course?

Where did they land?

Describe the journey by sea.

On what famous road did they now travel?

What can you tell about this road?

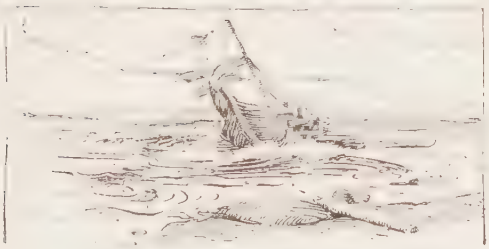
Where does it lead?

Who have traveled this road?

Who met Paul on the way?

How many days was he on the way?

Where did his journey end?



CHAPTER XXXVI

PAUL THE LAWYER *

WHO has not read of Paul the missionary, or Paul the great preacher, or Paul the faithful pastor?

Of course he was all of these and much more in the same line. And he was something else that we do not hear so much about; he was a great lawyer—greater it seems than John Marshall or Daniel Webster or Abraham Lincoln. A man is always remembered longest for the thing in which he was the greatest, and Paul was so great as a missionary, greater than any who ever lived, and such a great preacher and writer, that his abilities as a lawyer do not seem so wonderful as they really were; but if Paul were living today, he would be considered a very distinguished lawyer.

One of the few things we know of Paul's early life is that he was a student of Gamaliel, a great teacher of the law; and Gamaliel must have been very proud of his bright keen scholar when he made those wonderful arguments before Festus and Agrippa and the Jewish Sanhedrin, and perhaps before the

* This and the following chapter are from the pen of Judge McKenzie Cleland.

Emperor Nero himself. Of course the laws which Paul studied were mostly the laws of Moses, and not such laws as lawyers study nowadays, but it may be that if our law schools were to teach more of the laws of Moses, we should have more lawyers like Paul.

It is almost certain that Paul's practice as a lawyer was not very extensive, in fact so far as we know, he never had but one client and that was himself. It is an old adage that a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client, but that was not true of Paul. His defense of himself in every trial of which the record is preserved, was wonderfully able and brilliant. His arguments are models of logic and eloquence and his keen thrusts and pointed questions showed that he was more than a match for his opponents.

Every lawyer should study Paul, and none can fail to learn much from the cool lawyer-like way in which he presents his arguments and states his conclusions in all his addresses and writings.

It was well indeed for Paul and well for us too that he was skilled in the law and knew his rights so well, for he was often placed in positions where this knowledge and ability were of the greatest value to him. It does not lessen our love and admiration for Paul that he insisted upon the rights which the law gave him. He was a free-born Roman citizen, and the Romans had a law (Lex Sempronia) that if any judge or ruler should condemn or even chastise a freeman of Rome without hearing him speak for himself and then deliberating upon the whole of his case, he should be liable to the "Sentence of the People," who were very jealous of their liberties.

The first time Paul took advantage of this law was in Jerusalem, where he had gone to worship and to take to the poor Jews of Judea gifts from their more fortunate countrymen in Europe and Antioch. Upon the advice of James and the elders he had consented to go into the temple with four other Jews and offer the sacrifices of a Nazarite to prove that he had not, as was charged, advised the people of Europe and Asia to forsake the law of Moses. While doing this, he was discovered by some Asiatic Jews, who forthwith raised a riot, shouting out that Paul had brought Greeks into the temple and polluted the holy place. Mob rule is always unreasonable and generally punishes the wrong man. These fanatics "supposed" that Trophimus, an Ephesian, had been with Paul in the temple, but in this they were mistaken. Paul, however, had no chance to explain, but was pulled out of the temple and the doors were shut to prevent the possibility of bloodshed within its holy precincts. When we see churches now-a-days, locking their doors six days in the week, while men and women, and boys and girls are going to saloons and theaters and billiard parlors for the diversion which their social natures crave, we are apt to think of Paul left to die outside the closed doors of the temple. As the mob were beating him, the Chief Captain, Claudius Lysias, in charge of the Roman forces, came with a company of soldiers and rescued him, and after binding him with two chains carried him into the castle followed by the blood-thirsty crowd shouting, "Away with him."

Few men have ever had as much personal experience with mobs as the great Apostle. He had barely

escaped with his life upon several occasions, and at Lystra had been stoned and left for dead. But these had no terror for the man who had looked into the

PAUL SPEAKING TO THE MOB

face of the ascended Lord on the Damascus road. As he was carried up the castle stairs by the burly soldiers,

he asked permission to speak to the frantic crowd, and, the Chief Captain having given permission, the chained prisoner quietly facing the raging multitude "beckoned" with his hand, and the tumultuous mob was hushed into a "great silence."

There are in all history few scenes more striking and heroic than this.

Paul's motto all through his public life was: "I am ready." No occasion ever found him unprepared. He was always master of the situation, and here at a moment's notice, in a most unusual and unexpected crisis he had a powerful sermon ready to be spoken and worthy to be printed in full in the New Testament.

We can only imagine what Paul intended further to say to his excitable audience, for when he announced that his mission was to the Gentiles, the meeting broke up in confusion. He must have known that this statement would raise another disturbance, but a little thing like that never interfered with Paul's telling the truth. As they cried out to drown his voice, and tore off their clothing and threw dust into the air the Chief Captain saved Paul's life a second time by locking him in the castle and ordered him to be "examined," or whipped in order that he might be induced to confess his great crimes.

This sample of Roman justice gives us a glimpse into the stupid and brutal methods of dealing with persons accused of crime. We have not yet succeeded in getting rid of all injustice of this kind. If the Chief Captain had scourged a few of the ringleaders of the howling mob, there would have been in this

procedure at least some indication of common sense, but to punish Paul before he had been found guilty of any offense was surely very foolish as well as unlawful, and Paul's question to the centurion; "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" fell like a bomb in the castle. Quickly the suggestion was carried to the Chief Captain, "Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman"; and when Paul had explained to him in answer to his inquiry, that he was not only a Roman freedman, but had been born free, thus putting himself above the Captain, who had merely purchased his freedom, those who "should have examined him," departed from him, and the powerful military official also was afraid, because he had handcuffed him.

It fills us with admiration for the old heathen government to realize how it threw its powerful protecting arm around its most humble citizen. That was a protection recognized all over the civilized world, for Rome was its master. Today it means much to be an American citizen, if one is in a foreign land. Our government would send a gunboat half round the world to protect one of its citizens oppressed by a foreign power, and we would all throw up our hats and applaud.

On the morrow the Chief Captain adopted a somewhat safer and saner method of getting at the facts. Calling for a special session of the Jewish Council or Sanhedrin, to try his resourceful prisoner and loosing Paul's bands he brought him down and set him before them.

When we read of the methods of the Roman courts,

we have to confess that our own methods present less of an improvement than we could wish. There still is much to be desired in our own country.

Here was a court where Paul must have felt very much at home. It is barely possible that he was at one time a member of it, and without doubt, was well acquainted with many of the judges, for only on the previous day he had called upon the high priest and Council to bear witness to the truth of his statements (Acts 22:5). Without waiting therefore for an invitation he immediately proceeded to assert his innocence of any wrong-doing, but was rudely interrupted by the high priest Ananias, who directed those standing by to slap him on the mouth. We do not know whether or not the order was obeyed, for Paul let it be known that here again he knew his rights under the law; "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, for sittest thou to judge me after the law and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" When members of the Council gently chided him for speaking thus to the high priest, Paul's reply was tinged with sarcasm and might almost be read; "I hardly supposed from his conduct that he was any longer the high priest."

While the judges were probably wrangling over how to proceed with this refractory prisoner, Paul showed that he not only knew the law but that he was skillful in the trial of cases. Every lawyer defending a prisoner whom he believes to be innocent, tries to get a verdict of not guilty, but if he fails in that, the next best thing is a "hung" jury, for that gives him another chance. Paul knew very well that he stood

no chance of a verdict in his favor, and so he went after the next best thing. The Council was composed of two classes or sects; the Pharisees and the Sadducees, which held different religious beliefs and which were very jealous of each other, and Paul took advantage of this circumstance to "hang" the jury. "Men and brethren," he cried, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question." Instantly there was an uproar, the dignified court of justice threw dignity to the winds as its judges lined up to do physical battle if need be in support of their convictions. Never was a prosecution dealt a body-blow with more neatness and dispatch. Never did certain conviction fade more quickly into hopeless disagreement. The world's famous trials contain nothing equal to this and no lawyer ever had more reason to congratulate himself upon the outcome of his case.

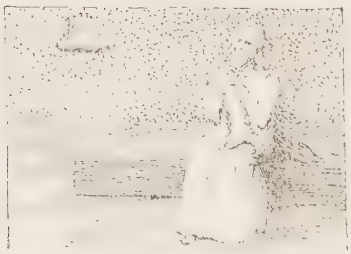
We can almost see the little apostle, for Paul is said to have been small in size, standing calmly and quietly and perhaps smilingly watching the effect of his strategy as "there arose a great cry," and "a great dissension," one side clamoring for his conviction and the other for his acquittal, until the Chief Captain, fearful lest his prisoner should be pulled to pieces, was obliged to lead his big soldiers the third time to the rescue.

Some have doubted whether Paul did right in his method of conducting his defense, but let no one have any doubts on that score, for that night the Lord appeared to Paul and assured him that his testimony in Jerusalem must be repeated in Rome. No lawyer

to whom the Lord appears at night with such a message, need worry over the way he tried his case the day before.

QUESTIONS

Who was Paul's teacher in the law?
What do you know about Gamaliel?
Did Paul become a good student of the law ?
Who was his principal client?
How did he get into court?
Was Paul a Jew or a Roman citizen?
How could he be both?
Tell of his arrest.
Were the methods of dealing with crime in that day wholly just?
Tell of Paul's trial before the Sanhedrin.
Tell of his trial before the several Roman tribunals.



CHAPTER XXXVII

THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR

NOVEL, strange, and unexpected things are always coming to pass in a great city. The day after Paul's trial a peculiar secret society was formed in Jerusalem. Forty or more men who appear to have been so well acquainted that they would not trust each other except under oath, solemnly swore that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. The special folly of this action lay in the fact, of which the members of this misguided society were of course in ignorance, that the Lord arranged a program by which the apostle was to take a trip to Rome at public expense, and these Jews learned what many a man has since discovered, that before one can safely take an oath to perform some act, he should be reasonably certain that he and the Lord are on the same side, else he is in danger of committing perjury.

Paul's nephew overheard the plot, and brought word to the apostle who took him to the Chief Captain, and that night, to the martial tread of a splendid guard, the world-famous journey to Rome began in accordance with the program of which the forty con-

spirators were still in ignorance. The first stop was made at Cæsarea, the royal headquarters, and here Paul was detained for his second hearing, before Felix, the Governor. It was five days before the Jerusalem conspirators succeeded in bringing on the hearing and the law's delays probably never seemed so grievous as to the hungry forty whose stomachs were clamoring for speedy justice. They were just then greatly in favor of the sentiment suggested by the poet when he wrote:

"And wretches hang that jurymen may dine,
The hungry judges quick the sentence sign."

And it is to be feared that much of the clamor for quick "justice," in the punishment of men who violate the law, without stopping to think of the after results, is about as unselfish. Paul alive meant the epistle to the Galatians and the conversion of Europe, but Paul dead meant a square meal to forty conspirators without breaking their oath, and so they wanted him killed. Men restored to good citizenship without punishment, means preserved homes, protected families, and useful lives. Men railroaded to jail means cheap convict labor, and so the jails are full.

When the case was called the prosecutors were present in force, but having had some experience with Paul's abilities as a trial lawyer, and realizing the need of quick action for the relief of their starving townsmen, they went to the expense of employing a certain famous "orator," Tertullus, who now appeared against Paul, and with the oily words of the flatterer, sought to prejudice the Governor against

the prisoner, and secure a speedy decision in their favor, but he failed. There was no jury now to disagree, but when Paul had concluded his masterly defense, the flimsy argument of the great "orator," had been smashed into fragments and the Court, unable to find even a pretext to decide for the prosecution, took the case under advisement until he could confer with Lysias.

In the meantime Paul was remanded to the custody of a centurion, who had orders to give him liberty, and forbid none of his friends to minister or come to him, a victory no less striking than that won before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. For two years, and until his term of office expired, Felix kept Paul in custody, apparently for no other reason than that he refused to pay for his release. Felix was a weak, cheap grafter, and although he strove hard for popularity, his Jewish subjects finally threw him overboard, for the Hebrew race has never had any use for weaklings.

Before his successor was appointed, however, he sent often for Paul, in order to give him a chance to broach the subject of paying for his release, but Paul persisted in talking only about "Righteousness, temperance and judgment to come," which made Felix tremble. Why should Paul bribe his way out of jail? If the Lord wanted him out, He could shake the doors off their hinges as He did at Philippi. Why should a Christian ever do evil that good may come? Why, merely because he is afraid the Lord won't agree with him as to what is good and desirable and so he decides to take no chances.

Paul was not that kind of a Christian, and so when

Felix gave way to his successor, Porcius Festus, he gave the Jews pleasure by leaving Paul in handcuffs.

Once more was it necessary for Paul to foil the plots of his enemies before he could start on his long-promised journey to Rome. Another society had been formed to kill him, but having learned something from the experience of the former conspirators, they did not take an oath not to eat anything unless they succeeded.

When the new Governor paid his first visit to Jerusalem, they presented what seemed like a harmless request, that he send for Paul to Jerusalem for trial, they having made secret arrangements to murder him on the way. This was not an unreasonable request because the offense with which Paul was charged was committed at Jerusalem, and it was the practice then as now, to try the prisoner in the city or district where he was charged with having violated the law. But Paul was to go to Rome, and Jerusalem was not on the way, and so the Lord in whose hand the hearts of kings are as rivers of waters and who turneth them whithersoever He will (Proverbs 21:1), caused the Governor to refuse the request and to invite the prosecutors to go down to Cæsarea and try their case over again; this they did ten days later, not taking along this time, however, the "orator," Tertullus, who had not been very successful on the last trial and whose clients had either starved to death or lost confidence in his ability. Instead, they went in large numbers and "stood around," and made many charges "which they could not prove." Festus, who was a very different Governor from Felix, was much disappointed at

the flimsy kind of evidence which the prosecution produced on this new hearing and which consisted of "certain questions of their own superstition and of one Jesus which was dead whom Paul affirmed to be alive," the stout-hearted prisoner still insisting upon his plea of not guilty, that "neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple nor yet against Cæsar have I offended any thing at all."

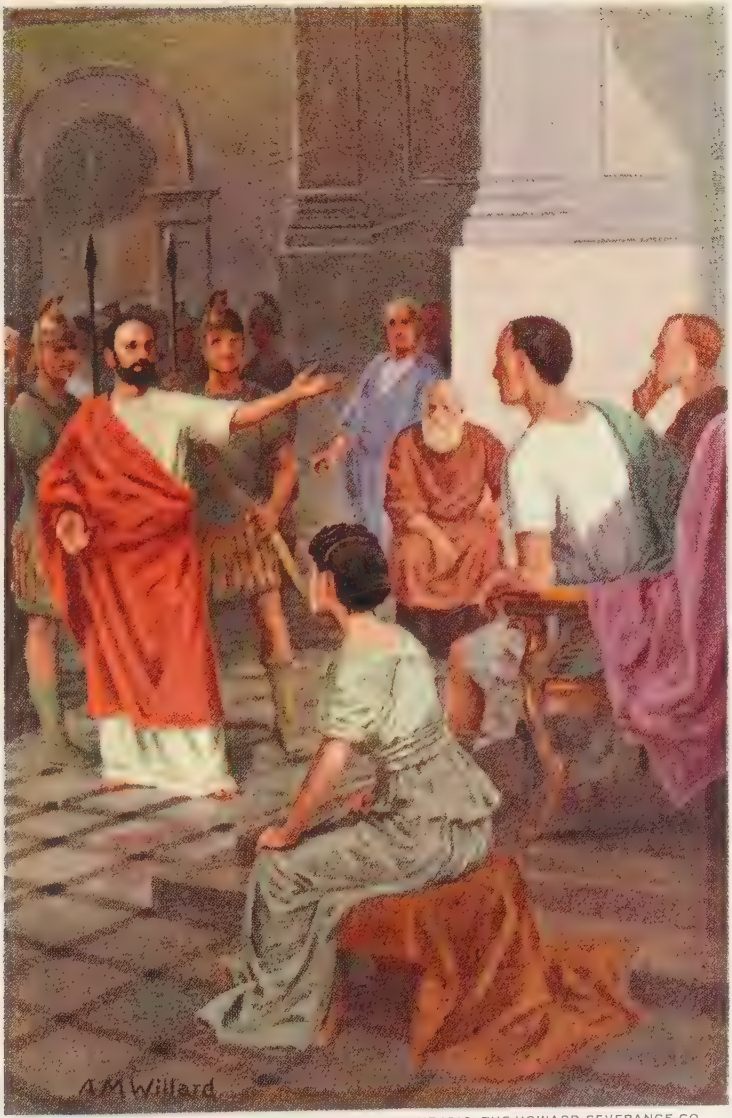
The new Governor evidently struggling between a desire to be popular with the Jews and to be fair to his defenseless prisoner, inquired "Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem and there be judged of these things before me?"

Here was a new and unexpected problem confronting the resourceful apostle. If he consented to go to Jerusalem, he would be again in the power of his enemies. If he refused, he had no assurance that Festus would not overrule him and grant the Jews' request. He therefore made a move which must have been a mighty surprise to his enemies. A move which put fifteen hundred miles between him and his persecutors, and effectually blocked every plan which they had made for his speedy destruction. He prayed an appeal to the Emperor Nero himself. His appeal was allowed by Festus and at last the "on-to-Rome" program is to be carried out. One thing, however, still troubled the Roman Governor. He had to transfer the case to the Supreme Court, but he didn't like the record he had to send up. What would the Emperor think of his way of administering justice if he should send a prisoner at public expense to Rome to take up his valuable time, against whom there was

no more serious charge than the breach of some Jewish superstition? Might it not cost his position to do so? In his perplexity he received a visit from King Agrippa the grandson of Herod the Great, whom he told of his difficulty; "It seemeth to me unreasonable," said he, "to send a prisoner and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him." So Agrippa offered to hear Paul himself, that he might be in a position to assist the Governor in fixing up a record which he would not be ashamed to submit to the Emperor.

The next day, therefore, a brilliant assembly, composed of the King and his sister, the Governor and the Chief Captain and principal men of the city, gathered to hear the much talked of prisoner "speak for himself," and upon Festus' command, Paul was brought forth.

There are many events in sacred and secular history which make our blood flow a little faster, and this court-room scene is one. Paul, now probably in his fifty-eighth year, the grizzled hero of many a hard battle with the enemies of his master, stands alone chained to a Roman soldier, no doubt the meanest looking person in that great crowd, but he is still Paul the ready, as confident and unafraid in the midst of this gold and glitter, this pageantry and parade, as when speaking to his little flock at Antioch or singing psalms in the jail at Philippi, and when permission had been given him to speak, he stretched forth his unchained hand and with fine courtesy, began that simple, direct testimony to the power of Christ, which brought forth from the startled king the famous



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PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA.

declaration. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

No doubt, Luke, the author of the Acts, had worked his way some how into that august assembly, and was thus able to give to this wonderful scene the lifelike features which it bears. Paul, always in earnest, must have fully appreciated the greatness of this opportunity to speak for Jesus. He must have known that under the Roman law, his appeal to Cæsar had removed from the lower court, the power to either condemn or acquit him, so that for himself he had nothing at stake, but the cause of Christ had much at stake. Here was a chance which he had never had before, and might never have again, and right royally did he improve it. Paying no attention to the others, he spoke directly to the king and in a manner intensely dramatic, told of that wonderful experience on the Damascus road which Luke had recorded twice before. We can imagine how still that court room was, for when Festus suddenly interrupted him, the Governor's voice seemed to Luke very loud. Paul had just reached his favorite subject, the resurrection, when Festus broke in, and the world lost very much, no doubt, through that interruption. A brilliant idea had just occurred to the Roman governor. If they could not find any criminal charge to put in the record on the appeal, they could allege that the prisoner was insane, and therefore not to be trusted with his liberty. It was too happy a thought to keep to himself and so he spoke out loud and stopped Paul's great argument at the most interesting point. Nobody else agreed with Festus, but ever since, the world, taking its cue

from him, has pronounced mad every man who becomes dead in earnest about religion. He can become greatly excited about politics and business and anything else, but let him but get enthusiastic about Jesus Christ and some one suggests a strait-jacket or a pad-

Paul Before Nero

ded cell. Again Paul won his case and the unanimous verdict of the distinguished jury was, "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds," and the King announced that had not Paul's appeal deprived

the Court of jurisdiction, he might have been set at liberty.

Did the great apostle make a mistake in praying his appeal and thus preventing his discharge? Many think so, but we cannot agree with them. Had Paul been set free, who can doubt that he would quickly have fallen a victim to the plots of his desperate enemies, and the world would have lost the letters to the Philippians and the Colossians, and Philemon and the Ephesians and Timothy and Titus, all of which were written after this.

Let us be truly thankful for the wisdom and skill of the lawyer-apostle, who brought such a blessing to us all by winning his case.

Of Paul's trial or trials before Nero, we have no authentic information. The haughty monarch was in no hurry to have his leisure interrupted by so trifling a matter as the liberty of a subject.

It is possible also, that the record of the proceedings at Cæsarea, which caused Festus so much trouble, were lost in the shipwreck, and had to be replaced, and so for two years the patient apostle preached and wrote and prayed while the frequent changing of the guard which kept him, permeated the invincible legions of Rome with the Gospel. It is entirely possible that some of these converted soldiers carried the message of Christianity to Great Britain and so we are the direct beneficiaries of the law's delays.

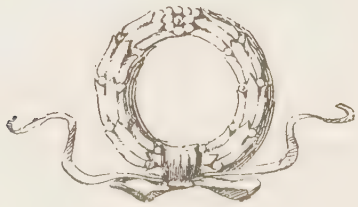
It is believed that Paul's success as an advocate, resulted in his acquittal and that after several years of freedom, he was again imprisoned, tried at Rome, and sentenced to death. His Roman citizenship saved him

from the disgrace of crucifixion, and hence according to universal tradition, he was beheaded in the year A. D. 68, the last year of Nero's reign, a victor to the very last.

"Servant of God well done
The stress of life is past,
The battle's fought, the victory's won,
And thou art crowned at last."

QUESTIONS

Tell of the plot to kill Paul.
Who revealed this plot?
Tell of the law's delays in the trial of Paul.
How many times was he tried?
Name the judges that tried him?
Why did he appeal to Caesar?
What right had he to do so?
Who was Caesar?
What did it mean to appeal to Caesar?
How were his judges impressed?
Before whom was his final trial on earth?
How did the case end?



CHAPTER XXXVIII

LETTERS FROM THE PRISON

DURING the two years Paul was in Rome, living in his own hired house, he wrote several letters, of which we have four.

One of these he sent back to Philippi, the first place he visited in Europe. It is the most joyful, affectionate letter he wrote to any church. He had received a visit from Epaphroditus, a member of the church in Philippi, bringing him a contribution and good cheer. Paul's expenses must have been heavy. He had to pay rent, and provide for the support of his friends who were with him, and perhaps had to provide for the pay and food of his guard. The money must have been welcome. But dearer to him was the fact that he was not forgotten.

While Epaphroditus was in Rome, he was sick; but he recovered, and Paul found him an earnest and lovable man. When Paul wrote to Philippi, Epaphroditus was getting ready to go back, and Paul thought of sending Timothy with him, that he might bring back an answer to the letter.

This is the way Paul's letter began:

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to

all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ.—(Philippians 1:1-6.)

PAUL PREACHING IN HIS OWN HOUSE IN ROME

They know he is in prison; they want to know if he is discouraged and forlorn. He is not. He has made up his mind that this imprisonment is the best thing that could have happened to him.

Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.—(Philippians 1:12-15.)

While Paul was in prison, a man named Onesimus came to Rome. He was a servant, and had run away from his master, Philemon. Paul sent a little letter to Philemon, and Onesimus took it back. Paul advised Onesimus to go back, and he wrote to Philemon to consider him "no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved." And he told Philemon that Onesimus had been kind to him in prison. This is the shortest of Paul's letters preserved to us; and is really a personal letter and a very interesting one.

Paul wrote another letter, and sent it to his friends in Colossae. He sent it by Tychicus, for he says:

All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord: whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state and that he may comfort your hearts; together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that are done here.—(Colossians 4:7-8.)

This shows us that the letter to Philemon and that to the Colossians were written at the same time, and sent out by the same messengers.

He also tells us who were with him at that time, and it is good to find that Mark was with him, and that Mark had quite restored himself to the good opinion of Paul. And Luke, the beloved physician, was there.

We also know that this letter was to be sent to another church and read there, and we see how these

letters were beginning to be passed around from church to church, and collections were beginning to be made:

Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him), and Jesus, that is called Justus, who are of the circumcision: these only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, saluteth you, always striving for you in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness, that he hath much labor for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you. Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church that is in their house. And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.—(Colossians 4:10-17.)

There is a touching word with which the letter closes. Paul took the pen to sign his name, and the chain cramped his hand and made it hard to write. He thought his signature would look like a scrawl. So he said, "Remember my bonds." It meant, "I could write better if I were not chained." Is it not a very interesting thing that we have these little per-

sonal touches in the letters of the great apostle? Think again what it meant, and then read this simple little postscript, not a long one as in Galatians, for he wore a chain now—

THE SALUTATION OF ME, PAUL, WITH MINE OWN HAND. REMEMBER MY BONDS. GRACE BE WITH YOU.

Paul wrote one more letter during his first imprisonment. We call it the letter to the Ephesians. It was sent out by Tychicus with Colossians, and is a twin epistle of that to the Colossians. It is both personal and doctrinal, and it combines some of the most precious teachings with intimate personal references.

He does not go into as minute particulars in this letter as in Colossians, for he expected both churches to read both letters, and Tychicus to tell the rest. So he says—

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.

But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose,

"The Prisoner of the Lord"

that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace

be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible.—(Ephesians 6:10-17, 21-23.)

QUESTIONS

What letters did Paul write from prison?

Who was Epaphroditus?

What brought him to Rome?

What happened to him there?

Why did Paul love the church at Philippi?

What had happened to him there?

Do you remember all about it?

Tell the story of how he came to be there; if you do not remember it go back to the chapter "We" and read that and the next.

Which is the shortest of Paul's letters?

How did it come to be written?

Who delivered it?

To whom was it delivered?

What other letter did Paul write at the same time?

Tell us about the letter to the Colossians.

How does it end?

What other letter was written about the same time?

Who were the Ephesians?

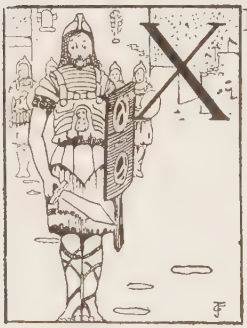
When was Paul in Ephesus?

Do you remember about it?

If not, go back and read the chapters on "In the shadow of a world's wonder," and "The riot over the images."

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE FINE ART OF FORGETTING



XENOPHON, in his "Cyropaedia" relates how the Persian boys were educated. He informs us that they learned to shoot with the bow and throw the javelin; that they were taught obedience and self-control; that they were given lessons in justice to each other and reverence for their parents, and that they were given many useful exercises in memory. In the education of the olden time, the memory was very carefully cultivated. And the Bible is full of exhortations to remember.

We need constant reminders of the duty of remembering. It is so easy to let important matters slip out of our mind; and some of them we are sure to need again. But it is important also to forget. One of the most striking verses in all the writings of Paul is that in which he says, "This one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind." He forgets as a means of remembering things that are ahead, and pressing on to secure them. There is a fine art in forgetting. It is just as important to forget the things we ought to forget as it is to remember the things we ought to remember. In order to under-

stand the greatness of Paul, we need to consider his method of leaving behind the things that were no longer of value. Let us then consider the Fine Art of Forgetting.

It is recorded of Themistocles that when Simonides offered to teach him the art of memory he declined to learn it, saying that he would much rather learn how to forget. Which is the more important, remembering or forgetting, need not now be disputed; but it might safely be affirmed that of the two it is more difficult to forget what one wishes to forget than to remember what one needs to remember. There are things to be forgotten. Let us specify a few of these, and find some suggestions upon the cultivation of forgetting as a fine art.

We ought to forget our past successes when the temptation to think of them becomes a substitute for present effort. There are certain authors, like Philip James Bailey, recently deceased, whose title to fame rests on one great work, accomplished in youth, and never afterward approached. When Bailey died the world had to be reminded that the man who wrote "Festus" had been alive ever since the publication of that poem. Some one has said that he could not forgive Bryant for not dying in youth, for then the literary world would have had the delight of perpetual wonder over what would have been accomplished had the boy author of "Thanatopsis" lived to mature years. It is unfortunate, sometimes, that the world remembers an adventitious performance of a young man, and measures its expectation of his future by it. It is more unfortunate if the man himself accepts

one really great accomplishment as a sufficient contribution to the thought and life of the world. It is a mistake for a Christian to attempt to live on the experiences of yesterday. "The mill will never grind with the water that is past." Let past achievements suffice for an encouragement, but let us forget them, and go on.

We ought to forget our past failures when the memory is discouraging to present effort. I know men who have tried and failed and so will not try again. Is there anything worse than to try and fail? Yes, it is much worse to fail without trying. Forget your failure and try again, for you are repeating the failure in a worse form when you fail to try. Do not brood over your failures. Forget them, and succeed.

We ought to forget our forgiven sins when their memory ceases to be a warning and becomes the occasion of brooding. Suppose your son every morning and night, tried to remember every fault of his life, and remind you of it, would it not weary you? "But, my son," you would say, "those sins were forgiven, long ago. Forget all about them, and be a good boy. I don't like to be reminded of those things."

No better does God like it. We have no right to continue asking Him to forgive sins that have been truly repented of and forsaken. Forget them, and go on and be a good child of God.

There is a quaint old conceit to the effect that every man carries two bags, one in front and the other behind. Some men keep their own good deeds in the bag in front where they can easily recall them, and

cast their own bad deeds and others' good deeds into the bag over their shoulder. Some men reverse the loads; and some, who keep the good deeds of others before them and cast the rest into the bag behind, take care that there is a good large hole in the bag to the rear, so that while all good actions of others are before them as an encouragement, their own good deeds and the bad deeds of other men fall through the hole in the bag, and are forgotten, else speedily they would become a burden, hard to carry.

If we ought to forget our own failures and our own forgiven sins, much more ought we to forget the faults and forgiven sins of others. There is a possible use to us in remembering our own faults as a matter of discipline and prudence; there is a sense in which we ought not wholly to forget them, but the reasons why we may not quite ignore our own outgrown faults and our own forgiven sins do not apply to our forgetting the frailties of others.

"But," some one may say, "that is just what I cannot do. I can forgive, but I cannot forget."

There is not much balm in forgiveness that does not include forgetting. A person who forgives must let the offense drop out of mind, put it away by strength of will in the first instance, and then quietly ignore it till it ceases to be remembered. To cease to think about it is the crowning mental triumph of forgiveness, and it prepares the way for that later spiritual triumph of restored fellowship. You can forgive, but cannot forget? Then the forgiveness is incomplete. So long as the offense is cherished, brooded over, it is unforgiven.

You cannot forget? Is your memory better than God's? Yet God forgets our sins. That is, He ceases to cherish them in his mind half unforgiven, as we do when we say we forgive but cannot forget. God forgives and forgets. "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more." (Jer. 31:34). By giving, when our left hand does not know what our right hand does, and forgiving and forgetting we become like God. When you say, "I will forgive but not forget," you really mean, "I am not ready to forgive." Do not think that you have forgiven while you say, "I cannot forget." When you have ceased to think of it with bitterness you will have forgiven.

A small boy once asked in Sunday school where the lesson was on forgiveness, whether if another boy should strike him during the coming week he could forgive him, answered with some hesitation, "Yes, sir, I think I could— if he was bigger than I."

That is not the kind of forgiveness that counts. It is easy to forgive the man of influence and position, the man from whom we may expect assistance; but the Christian forgiveness is free, complete and without consideration of advantage.

"But," asks someone, "must I forgive before forgiveness is asked? Surely you do not expect this of me?"

It is behind this excuse that many a man harbors an unchristian spirit. He will not forgive until he is asked to forgive, nor forget till he has forgiven. Let me relate an incident that illustrates what I want to teach upon this point.

It is characteristic of Christianity that its face is ever to the future. It has a splendid history, but it does not rely upon that history for its present power, nor is it as a deposit of historic truth that chiefly it is to be studied. It has a glorious past, but the past is not the sphere of its greatest glory. It points backward indeed to Eden and Sinai and Golgotha and Olivet, but only that it may beckon men forward to the redeemed society of earth and the transformed and glorified multitude of heaven. There is no limit set to the possibility of the future glory of the Christian life. Eye hath not seen it; ear hath not heard it; it hath not entered into the mind of the past. Wherefore forget the past, and press forward.

QUESTIONS

Why do we need to remember?
What do we need to remember?
Is it ever important to forget?
Did Paul have a good memory?
How do you know?
Did Paul think it important sometimes to forget?
What did Paul strive to forget?
Why did he wish to forget?
What should we forget?
Should we forget as well as forgive?
Can you cultivate your memory?
Can you cultivate your power of forgetting bad and disagreeable things?

CHAPTER XL

THE SPORTS AND GAMES OF BIBLE TIMES

ROMAN games attracted the attention of even men like Paul. Sometimes he attended them and used them as illustrations in his letters and sermons. In other places in the Bible there are references to games of one kind and another.

What games did Jesus play when He was a boy? What games did Paul play in Tarsus? What games did he witness in the cities he visited? The Bible gives us a part of the answer, and the rest we are able to supply from ancient classics, and from inscriptions which illustrate the different sports.

First of all we know that story-telling was one of the great joys of childhood in the days of the Bible. Fathers and mothers taught their children, not merely to read, but to know and remember, the stories which they had learned from their fathers and mothers concerning the great men of the past. Abraham and Moses and David were familiar characters in the thought of the boys of Bible times, because the fathers and mothers were good story-tellers.

Riddles were a favorite form of sport, and these

riddles were often told in little jingles. Samson told a riddle to amuse the guests at his wedding, and made a bet that his neighbors could not guess the riddle. The riddle was a little jingle that he thought out after he had killed a lion, and returning had found a swarm of bees in the skeleton of it, so that he ate honey from the carcass of the lion he had killed. This was his riddle:

"Out of the eater came meat:
And out of the strong came the sweet."

The guests were so angry because they could not guess the riddle, they teased and threatened Samson's wife until she told them. It was an unfair advantage; as when two men are plowing, each in his own field, and each trying to be done before the other, and one of them steals his neighbor's cow, and uses her in his own plowing. Samson said,

"You couldn't have guessed it till now
If you had not plowed with my cow."

Both his riddle and his answer rhymed in little jingles like these. The incident shows us what was one of the common amusements of the time, telling riddles in rhyme, and betting or demanding forfeits if they were not guessed. Samson's bet got him into trouble, and later made trouble for the other men.

We see in the story of David and Jonathan that archery was a common sport. Young men went out with bows and arrows and shot at targets; and sometimes took little boys along to pick up the arrows.

The sling is a favorite plaything with boys in Pal-

estine, and has been so since David's day, and probably before. The writer of this chapter has a sling which he bought in Palestine from a boy who was playing with it for a pastime.

PAUL WATCHING THE GAMES

The children in Jesus' day often played games that imitated funerals and weddings. Jesus represented one company of children who wanted to play and another who did not. The company that wanted to play said it would play any kind of game that the other would choose, but then the other children were displeased, and would play nothing. "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented," means, "We have offered to play weddings and funerals, and you will not play either; we have proposed everything we could think of, but you are cross and nothing will suit you. You are so contrary, we don't know what to suggest; we have done our best, but you are stubborn and will not play."

Bible children had pets, and loved them. "Wilt thou play with him as with a bird; or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?" is a question asked of Job, and shows us that girls in that time sometimes had pet birds.

We know from the Talmud that children used nuts for playthings, and there is an old proverb about

"putting away nuts" which reminds us of Paul's words, "when I became a man I put away childish playthings."

There was a rude "blind-man's buff" which was played in olden time. Sometimes in ancient Egypt, as we know from the monuments, a boy would kneel, and some other boy would slap him on the back, and he was required to guess who struck him. If he could guess, the other boy took his place; if not, he had to kneel again and let another boy slap him. The Roman soldiers played this rude game with Jesus when they held him in the court waiting for his trial, blindfolding him, and striking him and saying, "Prophesy who smote thee."

In ancient Egypt, children played with balls, tossing and catching them, rolled hoops, and played checkers. In Egypt, also, little girls played with dolls, and some of these dolls have been preserved. Boys had a jointed figure, something like a jumping-jack which they used in sport.

We do not know how many of these Egyptian games were used in Palestine; but probably some of them were familiar to the boys and girls who played with Jesus, and He Himself in His early childhood was in Egypt and may have seen and joined in some of these games.

The references to games in the older parts of the Bible are not numerous, and some of them are obscure, but they show us what in general were the joys of child life. And one of the promises of an Old Testament prophet for the happy city that was to be was that the streets of the city should be filled with boys

and girls, playing in the streets, indicating the peace and prosperity that was to come to Jerusalem.

Of all Bible authors Paul refers most frequently to the games of his own time. The number of references direct and indirect is considerable. He traveled so far, visited so many cities, had such varied experiences, it was natural that he more than any of the other writers should tell us of games. Some of these references are very interesting and important.

Did Paul when he was a boy ever build and play in a snow house? He says, "We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." What kind of a tent could he have had in mind that would melt? Tents do not melt; they fold up, roll up. They do not dissolve; they are packed up. A man who moves from a tent into a house does not melt the tent; he wraps it up, and puts it in the attic or the barn. But Paul speaks of a tent that melts. What did he mean?

Snow is not unknown in Tarsus. It does not last very long. But now and then there is a heavy fall of snow there; and it may have been that once or more in the boyhood of Paul a heavy fall of snow permitted him to play with other boys in building a snow house, which melted in the first warm winds of spring. Paul is saying that people do not die when their bodies die. The boy is not melted when the snow-house melts; he is more alive than ever when spring comes. Is this what Paul meant? Some people think that he meant this, and that he had really played in a snow house, a tent that gave him delight for a day or two and then

melted. It is not certain that this is the origin of Paul's figure of speech; it would be interesting to know whether Paul ever played in the snow. Winter sports are a great joy to all healthy boys and girls in cold countries; and it is possible Paul shared them, though infrequently, in his boyhood.

The Greeks of Paul's day had amphitheaters in all their large cities where races and feats of skill were performed. Paul must sometimes have visited these places. He might have done so in Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, or any of the larger Greek cities where he lived so long. We have no reason to doubt that Paul enjoyed an occasional afternoon watching these outdoor sports. It is in his epistles to the Corinthians and the Philippians that he uses most of his figures of speech derived from the games, but there are a number of important passages in his other letters.

Most frequent of these allusions is that of the foot-race. When he speaks of finishing his "course" the reference is to the race. More than once he expresses fear lest he may "run in vain." He had seen men who ran in the races and were disappointed. He thought of his whole Christian life as a race, and was saddened by the fear lest he might fail to accomplish all that he was running for. He remembered that all ran, but only one could obtain the prize in the race; and while that was not true of the heavenly race, he exhorted his friends to run so as to succeed; "so run that ye may obtain."

He remembers that the runner must strip for the race, and lay aside all needless weight. He thinks of this in his self-denial, and counts himself as merely

stripping off unnecessary and cumbersome weight, when he sacrifices pleasure to the greater gain of righteousness.

He thinks, too, what the prize is. In the games of that day it was not counted gentlemanly to run for a valuable prize; that made a man a professional, and not an amateur, and was like bringing a paid player into a college or high school game. The prize was a mere wreath of green laurel leaves. It withered soon, but men strove for it with all their might. Paul remembers that he, too, is running for a crown, but one that cannot wither, which God has laid up for the man who runs well and wins.

Paul tells us, too, that a man must play the game according to the rules. Even if he gets there first he is not crowned save he strive lawfully; he must play the game fairly. He says that he plays fairly, and he wants all to whom he writes to play the game of life in that spirit.

Paul has references also to boxing, which was practised in that day. He strikes, not as a man who hits at nothing but the air, but as one who meets evil at short range, and hits it hard. The evil that he hits is partly in himself, and he buffets his own body to keep himself in good form for his hard fighting. His passions are buffeted, and he watches his own temper as one who keeps his eye on a powerful antagonist, lest he be taken unawares and defeated.

There are many other references to games. Paul has allusions to the umpire, to the spectators, to the throng that fills the benches watching with interest and ready to cheer the victor. He had been there,

and had heard the glad shout when the winner ran home. He had seen the glow of joy on the face of him who attained. He had witnessed the red flush of satisfaction that climbed up the features of the victorious runner, and lost itself under the green leaves of the hard-won laurel crown.

In recent years we have seen the Olympian races revived. Some years ago these old-time games were played at Athens, and a great stadium was erected there. The American boys who went over and contended, brought away more prizes than those of any other nation. But, to the joy of the Greeks, they themselves won the long Marathon race. When the winner entered the stadium, and the Greek people recognized him as their own representative, the king's sons jumped from their seats and took him in their arms, and the King of Greece greeted him with a royal welcome.

Paul had been in the amphitheater and had witnessed such scenes. He wrote in his epistles very many references to them. His letters thrill with the ardor of these events. The strenuous effort of the contestant, the vigor, manliness, self-denial of the man who sets himself resolutely to win a prize, all this Paul saw, and understood.

There is a beautiful reference to this race of life in the epistle to the Hebrews. It represents the great amphitheater of life filled, tier upon tier, with a great cloud of witnesses, men and angels watching the result of our race. It represents Jesus himself as the winner of the greatest of the events, and as the starter and judge of our race. It exhorts us to lay aside

all our needless weight, and to put off sin as something that will surely load us down, and then to run, and win.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and prefecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.—(Hebrews 12:1-2.)

QUESTIONS

What were some of the games of Bible times?

Who told riddles?

Of what games did Jesus make mention?

What were some of the games of Egypt?

Which one of the apostles most frequently alludes to games?

Where could Paul have seen games?

Did he enjoy them?

What games may he have played when a boy?

What lessons does he teach from games?

In what spirit should games be played?

What lessons can you teach from sports?

CHAPTER XLI

PAUL'S FIGHT WITH WILD BEASTS

LOYALTY to the Christian faith was never given a more severe test than in the time of Paul, the apostle. During the terrible reign of Nero, Christians were compelled to fight with wild beasts. This was not in the time of Rome's greatest courage, but after it had become comparatively feeble, yet delighted in bloodshed. In the braver and more savage days, men were cruel in war, but less cruel in sport. Cruelty is the sport of cowards. Rome was most cruel when its bravest days were past. It was after the Romans ceased to be a race of conquerors and became a nation of lovers of pleasure that the most terrible sports occurred.

The Coliseum was not completed in Paul's day. Later its walls echoed the prayers of the martyrs, the sobs of their sufferings and the heartless shouts of the multitude, while the sands of the arena ran red, and the savage howl of the lions rose above their victims. But, in Nero's day, the sports were held in other places, and often in his garden.

The closing years of New Testament history hint at many stories that are not fully told. The Book

of Acts breaks off abruptly after Paul had been two years in Rome. We learn a little from his later letters. We catch furtive and appalling glimpses of the persecutions that show themselves in the Book of

To the Lions!

Revelation. And we learn more in the writings of the early fathers of the Church. But there is much that we do not know. When now and then a light breaks in upon the darkness of this period, it is red

with the glare of persecution of those who gladly died as martyrs for their faith.

Why did any one persecute the Christians? The Jews at first were hostile, as we know from the experiences of Jesus and Paul. But Nero was not a Jew, nor did the Jews cause the persecutions of his reign. Why did Nero persecute the Christians?

We are fortunate in having a brief account of this persecution, in the records of the Roman historian, Tacitus, and his account helps us to understand some things that otherwise would be dark to us. Also there is preserved a letter from a Roman governor named Pliny, to the Emperor Trajan, which tells us some very interesting things. Pliny was Roman governor of Bithinia, about 111 or 112 A. D. He wrote to the emperor that large numbers of people, men, women and children, were brought before him on the charge of being Christians. He asks whether he ought to consider this a crime, if they had broken no law? Also he asks whether he should treat them all alike, men and women and children? He had asked them about their worship, and found that they were in the habit of meeting on Sunday, eating a meal together, singing and praying, promising to be good, to abstain from impurity, theft, and deceit. But they would not stop these gatherings, even when they were told to do so; and the number of Christians was all the while growing. He said the "superstition" as he called it, was spreading like a great fire, and something must be done to stop it.

Trajan told Pliny that if Christians were brought before him they must be punished, yet he was not

to seek them out, nor to receive anonymous accusations against them. But the emperor said that a person accused of being a Christian might be discharged, if he would offer sacrifices to the heathen gods.

This was considered a rather kind answer, and showed that Trajan would have preferred not to injure the Christians, and that, in his reign, they were not treated as harshly as at some other times. Indeed, no general persecution of Christians is known to have occurred as early as this. Later there were many and desperate attempts to stamp the religion of Jesus out entirely, by the most bloody and terrible means. But all this was after Nero's day.

The charge against Christians was that they were "haters of mankind." This was because they would not indulge in cruel sports, nor in wicked games, nor live impure lives. They were serious, earnest, and seemed very stern; but really most of them were loving and kind. It is not known that any of them were bad people, and it was not for evil doings that they were punished. So far as we know, they were true to their promises not to lie or steal or live impure lives. Is it not very strange that they should have been persecuted for this?

Yet people who themselves were impure and wicked felt that the pure lives of the Christians were a rebuke to themselves; and so they sought occasion to accuse them of hating mankind, and of practicing very terrible acts and crimes.

Now it came about that Nero wanted some one to whom he could charge a crime of his own. Nero burned Rome. He did this because he wanted the

glory of rebuilding it, and making it more beautiful. For six days and seven nights the red flames and black smoke rose from the doomed city; and during that time, it is said, Nero played on his lute, and enjoyed the sight of the fire, and thought how all coming generations would hail his name as the man who built the new and beautiful Rome.

But people were very angry with Nero. They demanded to know who started the fire, and why. They wanted to know why the soldiers did not try to put it out, instead of helping it to spread. And they grew so angry that Nero was afraid of his own people.

So Nero invented a wicked lie. He said that the Christians had set Rome on fire, and that he would punish them for doing it. To cover his own crime, he had many of them arrested. And to please the angry people, he had the Christians terribly persecuted.

It is very likely that Paul had stood before Nero not very long before the fire. He had appealed to Caesar, and Nero was the Caesar then reigning. And Paul had probably been discharged; for we are quite sure that Paul was tried more than once, and that the first time he escaped. But Nero knew something about Christianity, probably through the trial of Paul, and also through the fact that many of his servants and soldiers had become Christians. Nero could not have failed to know that there were many people in his empire who hated the Christians; that they had very few influential friends; and that they were a company as little likely as any to fight back or make him trouble.

Tacitus tells us that "a huge multitude" confessed to being Christians, and that they were put to death by Nero. We must remember that Tacitus, who tells us this, himself hated the Christians, and that when he tells us this, he surely does not try to make their side of the story any better than it was. But the worst thing he can say about the Christians is that they were "haters of mankind." He knew, and so did Nero, that they did not burn Rome.

It was on the west side of the Tiber that Nero had his gardens. The great Church of St. Peter's now stands to mark the spot. There is but one thing left that was standing in Nero's day, and that is the obelisk which Caligula had brought from Egypt to adorn his circus, and which is the only one of these monuments in Rome that never has been overthrown. Round about that obelisk rose crosses on which Christians were hung, and Nero and his guests moved gaily among them, eating and drinking and laughing while the best men and women in the world were dying in torture. And at night, as Tacitus tells us, he would cover them with pitch, chain them to posts, and set them on fire, so lighting his gardens with these human torches. Remember it is not the Christians who tell us this of Nero, but a Roman historian, who himself hated the Christians.

Still another thing Tacitus tells us, and that is that Nero sewed Christians up in the skins of wild animals, and turned them loose in his circus, and then set loose upon them famished dogs, who tore them to pieces in the sight of the crowd.

By these terrible means Nero sought to divert sus-

picion from himself; and to save himself from what he so richly deserved for having set his own city on fire

So we know that Christians were compelled to fight with wild beasts. And we have abundant information concerning later persecutions, in which Christians were set in the arena face to face with wild bulls that had been infuriated with hot irons just before they were released. Sometimes they were thrown among lions, tigers and bears that had been kept for days without food, and goaded by men who prodded them through the bars of their cages. And often the Christians were given only wooden swords, lest they should hurt the beasts, which cost so much to capture, and were desired to be kept for use in later games.

These are not pleasant things to read. But young people must not be allowed to forget how great a price has been paid for the faith which they have inherited.

We are reminded of all this when we read in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians these words:

"If after the manner of men I fought with the beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me?"

Did Paul really fight with the beasts in the arena? We do not know. There was a great riot at Ephesus, but it would seem to have happened after Paul wrote this first letter. This cannot have been the time when he did it. He must have had in mind some other occasion.

But Paul was a Roman citizen, and most men who

were put to death in this way were not citizens, but men of humble race. And so it seems hardly likely that such a fate would have been reserved for Paul.

Yet it is not impossible that he had literally passed through that experience.

If so, how did he escape? Did he stand so bravely in the midst of his peril that the hearts of those who saw him relented, and demanded his release? Did he face the wild beasts, unarmed, with a courage like that of Daniel, and did they give way before his fearless eye?

We wish we knew just what Paul meant. It was some very terrible experience which he likened to the life-and-death struggle of brave men fighting against terrible odds for life and faith. It may be that the beasts were real lions and tigers. It may be that in Ephesus, whose ruins are now uncovered, in the very theater whose marble seats are now open to the sun, the apostle stood and unafraid faced the fury of the wild animals, and in some very wonderful way escaped. If Paul did not do so, many of his fellow Christians did, though, alas, very few of them came out alive. And Paul himself later suffered not danger only, but death, at the cruel hands of Nero.

But it may be that, when Paul speaks of fighting with the beasts at Ephesus, he is referring to those conflicts which he had with wicked men, who opposed his teaching, who made his work hard, and who tried to hurt him and to put him to death. And it may be that he refers also to those inward struggles which came to him as the desires of the flesh rose against the life of the spirit.

In this sense we all fight with the beasts at Ephesus. We have enemies in the temptations without, and enemies in the passions within.

Our own passions, anger and hatred and lust, are beasts that we must face and master. We must face them in the narrow quarters of our own souls, and awe them into subjection. We must drive anger behind the bars, and lock the door of the cage. We must trample hatred and evil thoughts and bad words under our feet, and stand victors over these beasts of prey.

We must face the beasts of temptation without us. They war against our souls. We must meet them, bravely, as Paul met his temptations, and must conquer them.

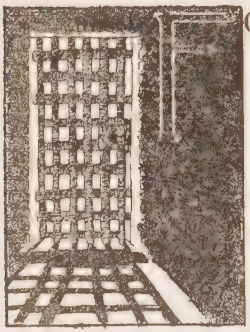
Every beast conquered adds strength to the arm of our faith. Every passion slain sharpens our sword for other battles. And the great cloud of witnesses cheer us on. Our fighting, like that of Paul, is for a great and lasting victory.

QUESTIONS

Who persecuted the Christians?
Who compelled them to fight with beasts?
Where does Paul speak of fighting with beasts?
In what city does he say he did it?
What beasts were used to devour Christians?
In what cities did this occur?
What beasts have we to fight?
Are we conquering our beasts?

CHAPTER XLII

THE HORRIBLE MAMMERTINE PRISON



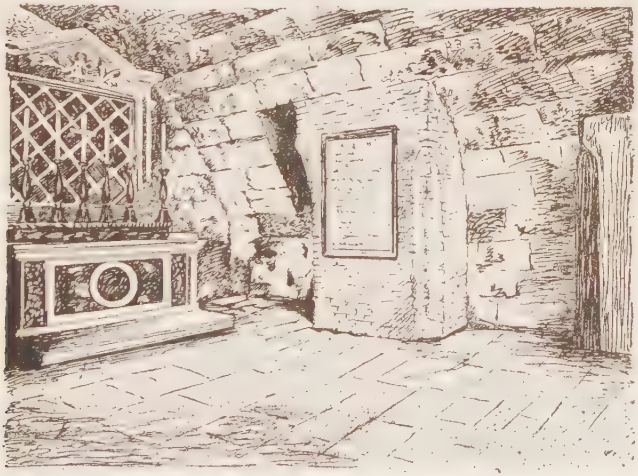
FOR two years Paul lived in his own hired house. He was chained to a soldier, and under constant guard, but he was not treated with cruelty. The courts had their wearisome delays then as now, and he waited and waited. He certainly had more than one hearing, for he tells us that at his first hearing no man stood with him; and he apparently had had more than one when he wrote and had others to come.

When Paul was imprisoned the second time he had something very different in the way of quarters. If tradition may be trusted at all, he was confined in the Mammertine Prison.

The Mammertine Prison is still in existence, and a church stands above it. The priests are pleased to receive a little fee, and light one down the dark stairs with candles into a horrible pit. Originally there were no stairs, but only a round hole in the top through which prisoners were let down from one level to another. There were two cells, and the lower one was just above the Cloaca Maxima, the great sewer of Rome. Alas, this exit was often used in the cruel days of old; for many a prisoner was strangled and

his body thrown into the horrible trench underneath.

The writer has visited this prison several times, and always with a chill of horror. No one can more fitly describe the sensations of this place than Hawthorne, who said of it, "Methinks there cannot be in the world another such an evil den, so haunted with black memories, and indistinct surmises of guilt."

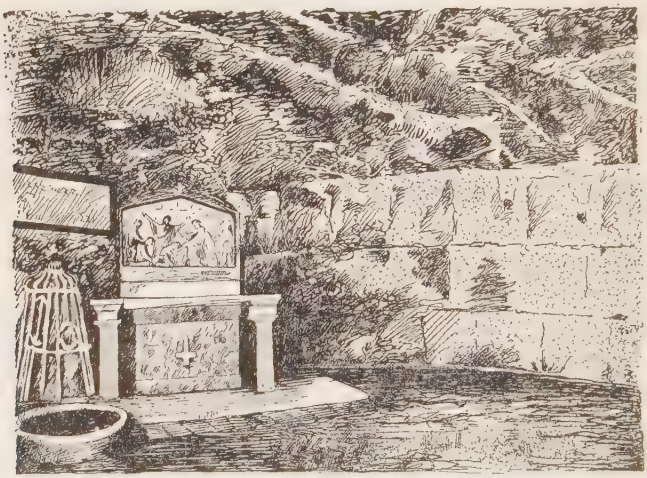


THE UPPER CELL OF THE MAMMERTINE PRISON

Another American traveler has written one of the best descriptions I have seen of this terrible place; and from it I quote:

"Many of the places that were memorable in ancient Rome have been lost to view, covered under ruins and brought to light in recent years through accidental discovery or painstaking excavations, but the Mammertine Prison seems always to have been remembered for its very horror.

"There is a little church at the north corner of the Forum fronting on a narrow street not very far from the Triumphal Arch and the Golden Milestone that is memorable in the ancient history of Rome. This little church is built to cover a two-story pit, which in Paul's day was called the Tullianum. With a



THE LOWER CELL OF THE MAMMERTINE PRISON

single exception this is the oldest building in the City of Rome. We pay a small fee and go down the stairway. Until within a year or two we had to procure a candle from the monks in charge of the church, but very recently they have put in electric lights. We go down this stairway into the dark and find below a not very large room, quite dark, with an altar at one side where people kneel and pray and where religious services are sometimes held.

"This place is dark enough and gloomy enough for

a prison surely, but this is not the oldest part of the building. When the builders were making this prison they found a chamber below and surmounted by a false dome. They cut off the upper part of it and covered the opening with flat slabs of stone and made a trap door through into the vault below. This deeper cell is the most ancient prison. Formerly prisoners were let down through this opening in the middle of the room, but now we can go down by a stairway. The room below is nineteen feet long, ten feet wide and six and one-half feet high. A tall man with his hat on can barely stand in it without stooping. How anybody lived in it with its absence of light and air is a mystery, but hundreds, probably thousands of prisoners have suffered here.

"Jugurtha, the son of Scipio Africanus and governor of Numidia, after having been a prisoner of the Romans in Africa, was brought here and spent his last days in this horrible pit. Whether he was strangled or starved to death we do not know, but he met his death in this place about 170 years before Paul. The place was already a chamber of horrors in the Apostle's day. The walls reeked with terrible memories. What Paul suffered other men had suffered before him in that same place and perhaps for centuries. Political prisoners had been let down through the hole in the ceiling and starved to death here. Livy and Sallust and Plutarch all speak of this place. It was infamous in literature and in legend before the Apostle Paul came to Rome.

"We do not positively know that Paul was imprisoned in this place. When he first came to Rome he

certainly would not have been put here for there was no such general prejudice against the Christians as to seem to justify so cruel a punishment for them, but when Paul suffered his second imprisonment things were very different. Christians had become numerous and all kinds of false charges were made against them, and if Paul came back to Rome in the time of persecution and was thought of as the foremost leader among them, it would not be at all unlikely that he should suffer in this deepest and most fearful dungeon of the Roman Empire.

"Tradition even goes farther and says that Peter was in Rome and in prison at the same time and that Peter and Paul were confined here together. If Peter really was in Rome in a time of persecution such as this and Paul should have been imprisoned here Peter would have been likely to have been with him, so while we do not know that either of these apostles were imprisoned here, there is nothing improbable in the tradition that they both suffered in this place.

"There is one beautiful thing even in this dreadful pit. It is a little spring which bubbles forth out of the rock. We do not know when that spring began to flow, but there is a legend which says that when the apostles were imprisoned here they preached to the guards and to their fellow prisoners and some of them were converted and because there was no water with which to baptize them they prayed and this spring broke forth. This probably is not true, but it is a beautiful legend and it is a beautiful figure of what is the truth, viz., that from this prison, or one like it, flowed forth streams of pure comfort and refreshment

in the letters which Paul wrote while he was in prison, and the Gospel which was borne forth from here to the Roman Empire and to all the world.

"When we come up out of the dungeon we stand at the head of a flight of stairs called the 'Stairs of Size.' Here prisoners were beheaded and their bodies were exposed to the view of the processions, who at this point climbed the hill to the Capitol. If there was a chamber of horrors in all the world it is this and nothing can better illustrate to us the depressing surroundings of the apostles where they did some of their noblest work than a visit to this cell."

The prisons of the world have been terrible places. There man's inhumanity to man has found some of its most terrible exhibitions. Too often the jails of earth have sent men out as dangerous to their fellowmen as when they went in, but with the added danger of the crimes they have learned in jail and the hatred in their hearts. Often they have said,

"I know not whether laws be right
Or whether laws be wrong;
All that we know to lie in jail
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year—
A year whose days are long.

"With bars they blur the gracious moon
And blind the goodly sun;
And they do well to hide their Hell
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor Son of man
Ever should look upon.

"The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison air;
It is only what is good in man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the warder is Despair."

Yet from prison have come forth some of the noblest messages that have cheered the hearts of men. In prison John Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress. In prison the one hundred nineteenth psalm was composed. And in prison Paul wrote some of his finest letters.

It may be only a myth that tells us that in the Mammertine Prison a spring gushed forth to refresh the apostles there confined; but it is no myth which we find in the pure streams of Paul's epistles which have flowed forth from that loathsome cell for our refreshment.

QUESTIONS

How many times was Paul imprisoned?
How do we know this?
Where was he imprisoned the first time?
How long did he live in his own hired house?
Where was he imprisoned the second time?
Where is the Mammertine prison?
Describe it.
Tell of the noted men who have suffered there.
What good thing came forth from this prison?
Who promised a blessing to those who were kind to prisoners?

CHAPTER XLIII

PAUL'S ADVICE TO HIS YOUNG FRIEND

WHAT an old man says to a young one is usually well worth hearing. When the ripe experience which the years have brought has been wisely interpreted, the words of age to youth are of rich worth. But when there is added still to this affection for the youth, fully reciprocated, and a yearning for his highest success, the parting message of declining age may be among youth's richest legacies.

The Bible is rich in its pictures of friendships. Among them that of Paul and Timothy is one of the most beautiful. "Timothy, my dearly beloved son," Paul called him, and he was to him what he might have hoped for in a child born into his own home. Whether back of Paul's solitary life there lay a tragedy or not, he was a lonely man, and into that loneliness came Timothy, an object of affection whom Paul took to his very heart. His last words to this young man, whom he loved as his own flesh and blood, are among the richest of all literary productions of their kind. He is writing to Timothy that he cannot live without him. He is in prison again, and not now as a privileged prisoner awaiting trial, but as

one who is chained and awaiting, as he believes, a sentence of death, as yet unpronounced, but certain to come. Of his old friends only Luke is with him. He longs for Timothy whom he loved as a father. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me," he writes. "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee. Do thy diligence to come before winter." Yet, perhaps in fear that Timothy may not arrive before he is offered up, he writes his message of love and exhortation. Perhaps to this misgiving, which we may believe was but too well founded, we owe in part this letter.

In the opening chapter of Paul's last letter to this young friend, there are suggested four things in the life of Timothy which may be appealed to and from which it may be expected that he will be a man. Each of these Paul recognizes as a divine gift. These are his ancestry, his instruction, his personality and his knowledge of the Scriptures. In every one of these four relations he discovers the gift of God.

Paul's first ground of confidence in Timothy is the fact that his faith, which is unfeigned and genuine, has a deep root in the lives of his mother and grandmother. Paul has been deceived about a good many people. On the other hand, he had overestimated a good many men. Demas, whom he had trusted, had loved this present world and had forsaken him. Many of his old friends despised his chains. It is time for a revaluation of those whom he had known. In answering the question which he put to himself and suggested to Timothy, whether this, his best beloved disciple, was worthy of his confidence, it was a ground

of assurance to him to remember that Timothy was born into the household of faith.

No man can afford to despise a noble ancestry. Samuel Johnson said many wise things and some foolish ones. Among the latter was his assertion that any man is well born who is born at all. His own life-long affliction with scrofula, from which the touch of Queen Elizabeth in his infancy had not availed to heal him, should have kept him from such an egregious error. We are right in affirming that no man should be deprived of any good which he can honestly attain because of the accident of birth. But we are very wrong if we assume that a man may attain the same distinction or accomplish for the world the same result, no matter who were his parents. There is probably no truer verse in the Bible than that stern part of the second commandment which speaks of the transmission of the results of sin to the third and fourth generation, unless it be the other declaration so often repeated in one form or another that God keeps convenant with the righteous to a thousand generations.

Paul and Timothy

Thus Paul reminds himself and Timothy that the latter's faith did not originate in his own conscious exercise of it, but was in a line of succession from a holy mother, who herself received it from a mother

no less holy. Because it had been in them, Paul was persuaded that this unfeigned faith, which he believed he discerned in Timothy, was in himself also. He might be deceived about Demas, for he had not known the mother of Demas. He may have been disappointed in Crescens, but he did not know about the grandparents of Crescens. He knew Lois and Eunice and Timothy, and was three times as well able to judge as if he had known Timothy only.

Let every man who has been born into a Christian home rejoice in his privilege. Let the child of Christian parents honor them and be worthy of their faith, which should be in him also. The world has reason to expect large things of him. It will be doubly a reproach to him, if he disappoints these reasonable expectations.

The next thing of which Paul reminds Timothy and himself as a ground of confidence in Timothy is the character of his instruction. There have been Lois and Eunice, as teachers, and besides there has been Paul. This has been a gift of God. Timothy has received his commission as a teacher of the Gospel by the imposition of the hands of Paul. Paul knows how much and how well the young man learned. He is able to estimate the value of the gift of God in connection with his preparation for the ministry, and his ordination to its offices. Yet this gift of God may be a passive and impotent thing if Timothy does not remind himself of what is conveyed with it, and stir it up. "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."

Blessed is the man who adds to the home influence of Eunice and Lois the manly Christian influence of pastor Paul. Mothers and grandmothers can do much, but the young Timothy needs some influences which they cannot wholly supply. Blessed is the boy who counts his pastor among his friends. Blessed is the Sunday school class whose teacher is a genuine man, virile and pure minded, learned and sympathetic, young of heart but wise in the teachings of manhood.

One thing more Timothy had, a knowledge of the Scriptures. This stood in his day for something not quite identical with what we today should mean by the same expression. It meant more than we mean, because a knowledge of the Scriptures then stood in great part for a complete education. We have set the Bible by itself as belonging to the sacred, as distinct from the secular. In that respect Paul's word meant more to Timothy, because it implied that he was a well educated young man, which unfortunately may not be true of one who goes long to Sunday school. On the other hand, it meant less to Timothy than to us because the best part of the Bible was still unknown to him. But in its essential import it means the same.

These, then, are the elements in Timothy's life which Paul believes in, and which he calls to the attention of Timothy, that he may be true to them. He has a worthy ancestry, has had good instruction and has received the gift of God at the hands of holy men. He has a mind of his own, sound, and with force of character, and a high purpose, and he knows the Holy Scriptures which are able to make wise

unto salvation. May this lesson discover a host of such young men in the classes where it shall be taught, and may they become men of God, perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy are recorded his last written words that have been preserved to us.

Last words are impressive. Too much importance may be attached to them, but when they are known to be the last, or spoken with the consciousness that they may be the last, and the importance of their influence is felt, they sometimes gather up the teachings of a life-time. Paul's second epistle to Timothy is of this character. The last chapter is especially tender and comprehensive. It embraces the fondest expressions of yearning for the coming of Timothy. It shows us the very heart of the old apostle, almost alone and near to death. It includes his last solemn charge, and rings with his undying death-song and confession of faith in Him who had power to raise him from the dead.

There is no death-pean in literature that matches this for its sublime confidence in God, its humble yet happy retrospect, and its triumphant hope of eternal life. "I have fought a good fight." His life has indeed been one of conflict. His flesh has had no rest. Without have been fightings and within have been fears. He has finished his course. A tired but victorious athlete, he drops at the goal, panting for breath, but flushed with triumph. Over him hangs the sword of Nero, but above is the Lord, the righteous Judge. The laurel crown of Marathon or Corinth might seem to repay a long and wearisome race,

but for him there is laid up a crown of righteousness. It was not his exclusive possession. So run that ye may obtain, for the crown is for all who love our Lord's appearing, and discern it in the progress of His kingdom, which progress their own lives promote.

Thus ends the life of Paul. If we may trust tradition, and we have nothing else that can guide us here, he laid down his life in the year 68, beheaded by Nero. Peter, it is affirmed, died about the same time, and John was then a prisoner, as later he appears to have been again, in the isle of Patmos. Nero was on the throne and the souls that were under the altar cried aloud like the blood of Abel. But the rapt seer on the island, while yet a prisoner there, saw the reigning head of the great beast wounded to the death, and above the clamor and carnage and confusion of the earth, he heard the triumphant song of the redeemed, who had come up out of great tribulation, which was but the glorified echo of the dying words of Paul, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing."

QUESTIONS

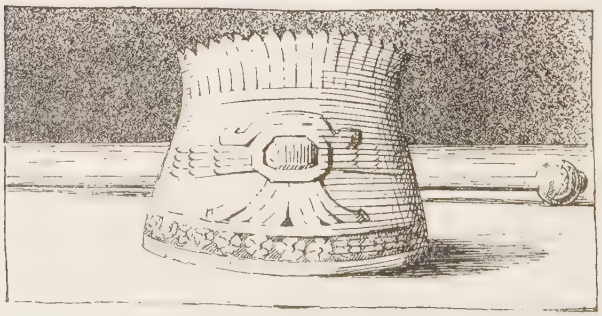
Name some of Paul's young friends.

Who among them was dearest to Paul?

What was there about Timothy that Paul liked?

What were the hopeful elements in the life of Timothy?

What was his mother's name?
What was his grandmother's name?
How did Timothy learn the Bible?
Who taught you the Bible?
Are you learning to love it more?
Are these stories helping you to learn and love it?
Why is the Bible the best book?
What is the best time to learn the Bible?
What book is richest in friendships?
Name some of the friendships of the Bible.
What young friends did Paul have?
To what young friend did he write?
How many letters did he write to him?
What do you know about Paul's last letter?
From what place did Paul write this letter?
Have you read of this place in another chapter?
How much do you remember about it?
Was it in his first or second imprisonment?
How do we know?
What were the last messages of Paul in this letter?



CHAPTER XLIV

THE HONOR ROLL OF THE FAITHFUL

NE of the most interesting letters in the New Testament is that to the Hebrews. It is written to Jewish Christians, and to Jews who are not Christians, to show how the good things that the Jews have are all preserved in Christianity, and that still better things are there.

It says that God gave the Jews a revelation, but that all which the prophets told the Jews are less than what God has told us in His Son:

God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. —(Heb. 1:1-4.)

This leads up to a reminder that the faithful

men of all ages were really men of the covenant of faith, as truly as those who follow them:

Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. For therein the elders had witness borne to them. By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God: and without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.

By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out into a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of

the same promise: for he looked for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come.

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph: and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, when his end was nigh, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a goodly child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians essaying to do were swallowed up.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days.

By faith Rahab the harlot perished not with them that were disobedient, having received the spies with peace.

And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah;

of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth. And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.—(Hebrews 11:1-10, 20-27, 29-40; 12:1-2.)

When we read a chapter like this, we see how long is the roll of the faithful. For this epistle really

gives us but a few sample names from the past. Other names are being added in heaven all the time.

And we see how scientific it is to have faith. For all men of science are men of enlightened imagination, men who see things before they come to pass, men whose faith gives substance to things hoped for.

Scientific men have sometimes not understood this, and have spoken slightingly of faith as though they did not themselves possess it; but the greatest scientists have been men of profound faith.

By faith Columbus, when he was called of God to discover a new continent, went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sailed strange waters, with Cabot, Magellan, Vespucius and Balboa, the heirs with him of the same promise; and they beheld a new world rising from the waters, new heavens and new earth, fresh from the hand of God.

By faith Copernicus lifted the earth from its solid base and set it to moving in rhythmic order round the sun, and all the suns and suns of suns, with planets in bright array, circling round the throne of God; and this he beheld by faith.

By faith Galileo when he had been forced to recant, still testified that the earth moves ever at the decree of God, enduring persecution till the mind of man, moving by the same decree, found its orbit in the same true faith.

By faith La Place understood how the worlds are made from star-dust, and framed by the word of God, so that the things that are seen in the making take their place in the established order of an infinite God of goodness, order and might.

By faith Newton beheld in the fall of the apple the demonstration of an all-compelling force, operating by the unchanging will of God, so that the worlds are held in place and not by the things that do appear.

By faith Paracelsus, when he was dying, bequeathed to those who followed him an imperfect science, much mixed with error, but left the inspiration of his name to others through whom the indivisible elements of earth and the laws that combine them were made known.

These all died in faith, not receiving the promise, but being persuaded of them and embracing them and moving toward them, and bequeathing to others the heritage of their faith.

By faith men suffered persecution, ridicule and poverty, and walked from office to office wearily and in threadbare garb, trying to enlist the sympathy and faith of their fellow men in what the world thought visionary, choosing rather to suffer affliction as the children of faith than to sell their vision for bread.

All men of science were men of faith, and if they did not know it, then it is a pity: for their faith gave substance to the things they hoped for, and led them from experiment to hypothesis and from hypothesis to theory, and from theory to discovery, and from faith to sight; these also were the children of faith.

And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Stevenson and Fulton, of Morse also and Edison and Roentgen and Lister, Cyrus Field and Alexander Bell, Marconi and Wilbur

Wright, who through faith made iron float, yoked chariots to the invisible power of steam, caused the voice of man to be heard by his fellow at a distance of a thousand miles, brought the mind of man into touch with that of his fellow man beyond the sea, filled the air with voices inaudible to the ear alone and intelligible only to the mind of faith, and lifted the bodies and minds of men on wings of wonder and set them to sailing amid the clouds.

Through faith they built railroads, irrigated deserts, crossed the trackless ice to the poles led by faith in the compass and the stars, subdued climate, overcame hardship, out of weakness were made strong, added to the span of human life, wrought wonders incredible, and filled the columns of the daily press and the pages of scientific periodicals with the news of their achievements that ceased to be wonderful through their very incredibility and certitude.

Now they who do such things see visions of them before they come to pass, and are men of faith. And these all, and they who labored with them and before them, lived in faith, and those who died, died in faith, that all who follow may add their knowledge to that which has gone before, and the world by the gift of all men of faith at last shall be made perfect.

QUESTIONS

In what book of the Bible do we find this honor roll?

In what chapter?

Name some of the men who are mentioned there.

Why are their names recorded?

What did they do?

How do men obtain faith?

What is faith?

What are men doing now to lengthen this list?

Can you think of some men of great faith whom you know?

Are they good men?

What makes you think so?

Is faith scientific?

Does it require faith to be an inventor?

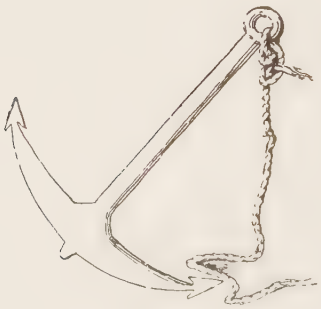
Must a farmer have faith?

Why?

Have you faith in your mother?

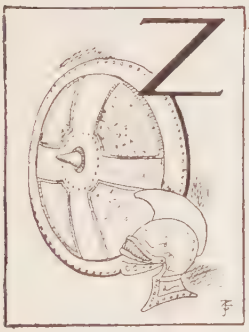
Have you faith in your father?

Have you faith in God?



CHAPTER XLV

PAUL'S FIGHT FOR SELF MASTERY



ZEAL and ardor filled the spirit of Paul. No one who reads his epistles can fail to notice his constant use of military figures. During his later years he was constantly with soldiers, and much of the time was chained to one. The famous Siamese twins grew very well acquainted; they could not help it. So Paul was certain to learn a great deal about soldiers; because for years he had a soldier constantly at his side. As the guard changed frequently, he must have come to know many soldiers, and to hear much conversation about their life. He examined their arms and armor; he asked them questions about their marches and battles; and he came to use a great deal of the language of the camp and battle field. And frequently he spoke of himself as though he were a soldier.

Traits of mind and powers of body are not always in direct ratio to each other. Paul was no athlete, yet he had a fondness for athletics. He was physically unfit for a soldier, yet his life moved on to the march of martial music. Our best conception of his appearance makes him an undersized man with weak eyes,

and possibly an added nervous infirmity which caused his bodily presence to contrast unfavorably with the power of his utterances, so that some audiences preferred reading, to hearing, his discourses. At times Paul was so keenly sensitive to his physical disabilities that he expresses the warmest gratitude to those who heard him for his message's sake, "as an angel from God," not despising his infirmity in the flesh.

It may have been in part because of these very limitations that Paul's writings so abound in martial figures, and in illustrations from athletic sports. Oliver Wendell Holmes, a small man, unfitted for feats of physical strength, had the warmest admiration for muscular development and had ever the spirit of the athlete. I have an autograph letter of John G. Whittier to Lucy Larcom written just after the battle of Stone River, and expressing great admiration for "the daring of Rosecrans, snatching by his personal prowess, victory from defeat." Then almost self reproachfully he adds, "Ah me! It is hard to be a Quaker in these times! Yet never was I more convinced of the truth of our principles than now." Convinced as he was of the truth of his principles, his admiration for courage, and his sympathy with every effort in behalf of human freedom caused his Quaker bosom to heave with the heart of a soldier.

So Paul, perhaps the more because he could not actually perform them, constantly interpreted his own spiritual strivings as feats of strength and combats at arms. His tumultuous efforts to establish the church at Ephesus were to him so many fights with the beasts in the arena. His self denials were to him

the prohibitions of the racer, stripping for the long run like that which a few months since made a young Greek peasant illustrious. His contests with passion were to him body blows, dealt not at a striking-bag, or as strokes in the air, but the able-bodied buffeting of a mighty antagonist giving blow for blow. His nervous haste to compass the Roman Empire in his work of planting churches was to him the zeal of a contestant pressing toward the goal for a prize—a prize which, if he failed in the accomplishing of his duty, would disgrace him with his unfaithfulness that had occasioned its loss.

All these figures seemed to Paul to belong as naturally to his spiritual life as they were impossible to his physical life. Whatever his appearance might make him seem to others, to himself he was Paul the athlete, the soldier. When he stood beside the centurion who had rescued him from the mob, and the soldier boasted of his purchased citizenship, Paul's stature rose till he over-topped the stalwart officer, and he said, in his soldier-spirit, "But I was free born." When he had been imprisoned and beaten at Philippi, and the magistrates found, as they soon did, that they had over-reached themselves, and sent word to let him go, never questioning that he would gladly disappear, and that would be the end of it, Paul stood up in his armor like Horatius on the bridge and said, "They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily, but let them come themselves, and fetch us out." And there Paul stood his ground till he brought the magistrates

to his feet. Down from the hill they came in their robes of office, the crowd gathering before the prison doors to see what was to happen, and then they opened the prison doors and invited, requested, "besought" Paul and Silas to go out; and Paul went out, with back sore from his beating, but with the spirit of a conqueror.

All these experiences were battles to Paul. Writing afterward of this trying time, he said that his flesh had no rest, because of the fightings without and fears within. But the fears also were battles. Some of Paul's hardest battles were subjective. That physical weakness which became the occasion of his preaching in Galatia, and may have caused his introduction to "Luke, the beloved physician," who thenceforth was ever with him, was to him a long, and for some time, a losing battle. Repeatedly he besought the Lord for the victory, and when the victory came, it was not in relief from his infirmity but in grace sufficient to bear his burden faithfully. And thus did Paul conquer!

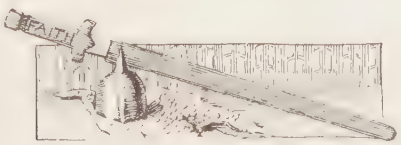
So throughout the epistles of Paul there echoes the note of the bugle, and is heard the steady tramp of his feet to the beat of the drum. The man who was little in stature was one of the world's spiritual giants. He who was feeble in body was the victorious gladiator in life's arena. He who bore no sword, and would have fallen under the weight of armor, put on the whole armor of God, and mightily wielded the sword of the Spirit. Almost his last words are those of the soldier of the cross. As in his first epistle to Timothy he girds him for the conflict, saying

"Fight the good fight of faith" (I. Timothy 6:12), so in his last he sits, a prisoner unsubdued, nay a victor resting on his laurels till the door opens to the King: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

In this study of the military allusions of Paul, we have been considering almost wholly those that relate to Paul's own battles within himself. But Paul also knew that he was fighting a great battle in the world, for the triumph of the Gospel of Christ. No one can understand or interpret this so well as a soldier; and so we shall study Paul's life as a Soldier of the Cross, under the guidance of a brave soldier, General Carrington, who, besides fighting his country's battles, as an officer in the regular army, has been for many years a student and teacher of the Bible.

QUESTIONS

Was Paul a soldier?
Did he admire soldiers?
What battles did he fight?
What enemies did he overcome?
What weapons did he use?
How did he conquer himself?
What victories must we fight and win?



CHAPTER XLVI

PAUL THE SOLDIER

PART I

NO one who reads the previous chapter can doubt that Paul was a soldier. And we have good authority for the statement that he who conquers and rules his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. If Paul had fought no other battles than those which gave him self-mastery, and had won them as he did, he would have been a great soldier.

But Paul did more than this. He was the leader in one of the greatest wars in human history. A soldier sees in Paul's epistles the evidences of a mighty conflict, and marks the battle lines of a great world struggle.

In considering this mighty conflict, we must draw the lines of battle, and see with what strategy and courage the fight proceeded.

We have said that Paul was the leader in one of the greatest wars in human history. He was doubly a leader. He was the leader of two armies, and very

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*The four military chapters which follow are from the pen of General Henry B. Carrington, of the United States Regular Army.

different ones. So we shall study his military experiences in two chapters.

These two chapters are a history of the military operations of the great war in which Paul the soldier fought the good fight to win a world for the Prince of Peace. The conflict falls in two parts. In the first part there was a great war against Jesus the Christ.

The declaration of war was based upon the pretext that Jesus of Nazareth spoke blasphemous words against the Law and the Holy Place, the Temple, and would change the customs which Moses had delivered to the Jewish people. In this war Saul of Tarsus was in chief command.

In the second part we shall see how Saul, himself conquered, became the leader on the other side of the same conflict, and fought to make the Prince of Peace triumphant. In this warfare we shall find Paul, the Apostle, in chief command.

The first military organization recorded in sacred history was that of Abraham, dividing all men into companies of fifty or one hundred each, and then combining them into a larger organization of ten companies, known to the Roman as a legion, and in modern times as a battalion or regiment.

Indeed, so accustomed were the Hebrew people, who served the true God, to be prepared for all the issues of war that, even when Jesus, our Saviour, ordered the people to be seated on a turfy mountain slope for refreshments, in some systematic form of fraternal association, it is said that "they seated themselves in companies of hundreds, and fifties."

The songs of Deborah and Miriam breathed patriotism as well as love of home. These brilliant and heart-searching devotions, expressing self-sacrifice, wisdom, and courage were parts of their great struggle for happiness and the safety of their home and fatherland.

In all ages, however, every defense through men-at-arms has, of necessity, brought into exercise every noble element of character; and when we will direct these elements, however hard the struggle, to free the earth from despotic tyrants and rescue the home life from the human beasts that fight to destroy it, we must of necessity honor the soldier; and it is not too much to say, that every great event of true progress has had its most fruitful elements of success in the exercise of just the qualities that make a soldier great in the best elements of mental and physical nerve. Every prophet and priest framed predictions and encouraging guarantees in the sublimest of prose and song, and the jubilee of victory in the field became in the temple the Hosanna to the God of Battles.

In earliest times men used such simple weapons as slings, bows and arrows, knives, first of stone and then of iron, and then swords, spears and javelins. They covered their bodies with skins, and made shields of the same material, until, in the days of the Egyptians, they began to learn to make armor. So skillful had the Hebrews become, in the days when the Philistines were led by the giant Goliath, who carried an enormous sword and shield, and wore mighty iron armor, that once, when the Hebrews were under

Philistine rule, they were not trusted with any tool, except to sew their clothing, for fear they would invent and make weapons that would free them from bondage to the Philistines.

In the early decline of Jewish liberty, under the all absorbing sway of haughty Rome, the Maccabee family prolonged their patriotic effort with the proudest zeal and wonderful skill in every military art.

And I would like to have young people understand that after the Jews had secured their "Land of Promise," already noticed, they lived only for its defense. They wanted peace. They sought no conquests from their richer neighbors. Neither mighty Babylon nor Nineveh had charms for them. Jerusalem was their Holy City, and Zion their center of divine homage and worship. They had been forced to fight heathen foes so often, that they began to measure their happiness by physical power rather than by peaceful repose, and so it unfortunately happened that at the very dawn of the Messianic deliverance, while not ignoring the fact that Jesus had been born, as promised, of the seed of David and in Bethlehem as well, they still insisted and believed, with their aristocratic leaders, that their coming Messiah should be, in fact, a temporal king and restore the political supremacy of their people.

With corresponding unholy purpose, they bent all their energies to thwart the true mission of the promised Prince of Peace; working with more bitter passion than they fought to save the Holy City, Jerusalem itself, from the conquest of Rome, and probably with more zeal, because Rome herself did not

limit their savage assaults upon the disciples of Jesus, Himself a Jew.

All the hate and prejudice they had maintained against heathen enemies seemed to crystallize in form, as they sharpened their swords and teeth against the despised Nazarene. Unable to punish to the extreme under the Roman law, but permitted to enforce their own jurisdiction against men of their own faith and men of their own blood, they haled men away to prison with the fury of the most bigoted zealot, without regard to age, sex, or condition.

Among the most ardent and fanatical of this class was one of their number, a man of highest education, ability, and culture, very well versed in all the forms and ceremonies of his aristocratic colleagues, whose name became a terror to the humble followers of Jesus throughout the entire region that drew its influence from Jerusalem.

Up to that time, as ever since, the most terrible of historic wars have been those where religious convictions have assumed the mastery of both passion and judgment and have claimed to act under divine command, in the exercise of brute force; and thereby have made education, sagacity and strategic art the more deadly and fatal in their strokes.

Such was this man's tact, cunning circumspection, and employment of willing and beastly subordinates that no combination of humble Christian believers could organize resistance to his will; and the cruel war went on.

The name of this man was Saul of Tarsus and his well-stored brain-arsenal was stocked with imple-

ments of wrath and cruelty. Openly or secretly he hunted for his victims, under the conviction that he was doing God's service. He had the ability of a great statesman, the acumen of a profound magistrate, and was one of the ablest of his generation, if not of all Jewish history. Commanding, as he did, the confidence, as well as the backing of the highest aristocratic support, there was no human agency or restraint that could thwart his evil devices against the disciples of the promised Messiah.

On the one hand, he appreciated power and was proud to possess and exercise it, as well as proud to have the power recognized and honored by his agents and those of high degree who impelled him to action.

In addition to that, he had no real knowledge of the real convictions of the disciples of Jesus. They belonged to a poor and despised class generally. His own religious convictions were of a strictly formal and technical type, without a drop of that sentimental and spiritual essence that gives pure religion its grace and comfort and thereby blesses every soul that needs divine strength in performing its duties to God and man.

How little did he imagine that ere many suns should set or moons should wane, he himself should shrink in terror beneath the opening heavens, whither the released spirit of the murdered Stephen winged its happy flight when released from the sleeping body without the city gates! And how little could he even dream that his very name would disappear from the rolls of Jerusalem and that the new name of Paul would head the legions of the soldiers of the cross,

honor the memory of the martyred Stephen, and in the dawning future achieve for the realized Messiah universal dominion throughout the earth.

Devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentations over him.

Saul indeed, made havoc of the Church, entering into every house and haling men and women away to prison. But the common people who had heard Jesus gladly and had been inspired by Stephen's address, so multiplied that even as far away as Samaria where Philip preached the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, great multitudes were baptized in His name.

The last we hear of Saul, the persecutor, was on a later trip to Damascus when, before he entered its gates, he was challenged to a "Halt" in his journey and yielded an unqualified surrender of all authority to the order of Jesus, Himself, the Prince of Peace.

This is the story of his first battle, and the way he lost it. He was fighting bravely, but on the wrong side. We admire his courage, but we know he was in the wrong. All his arms of fetters and authority to bind men and women fell to the earth at the word of Jesus: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." The persecuted Jesus was the conquering Christ. The haughty persecutor was the defeated fighter.

No man really wins who fights on the wrong side. All the courage and zeal of Saul the persecutor were wasted, and worse than wasted, when he was in the wrong. This life is a soldier's battle: but in battle it is important not only to be brave, but to be on the

side that is right and that is to win. Saul lost the first great battle of his life because he was fighting against the Prince of Peace. In the long, long struggle that began long before his day, and that still continues, Saul joined his fortunes to the losing side. And every boy must lose who fights under the banner of hatred and strife.

QUESTIONS

Who writes these military chapters?

Why was a soldier selected for this purpose?

Who uses more military figures than any other New Testament writer?

Is there a war between right and wrong?

How long has it continued?

How long will it continue?

Who fought against Jesus?

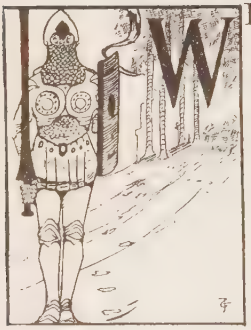
What was the result of the fight?

What have you learned from this chapter?

CHAPTER XLVII

PAUL THE SOLDIER

PART II



WE have considered the battle which Saul the persecutor fought and lost. We have seen his pride humbled to the dust, as he lay prone on his way into Damascus. What happened to him afterward?

Paul was always a soldier in spirit. As he had fought against the right, he now became foremost among the soldiers of the cross of Jesus. Although he never himself bore arms, or marched to martial music, the note of battle sounds in his epistles, over and over again, and he was in his own thought, a soldier in the army of the Lord. We are about to consider the military figures which he uses. But as we do so, we see at the very outset that these were deliberately chosen, and that they are in a marked degree personal. Some figures of speech are incidental; but those which Paul uses in describing himself as a soldier are distinctly personal. Paul thought of himself as a soldier, and of his work for Jesus as a battle.

The wicked killing of the martyred Stephen by the

enemies of the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, had furnished a remarkable example of the sweet and wonderful beauty of Stephen's character, the exact type of such as may come to anyone, old or young, who takes into his life the spirit and the teachings of Jesus. Persecution endured for Christ's sake always results thus. Not only the history of the Church, but the history of all nations, has proved beyond any possible doubt that the divine purpose of the Creator of the human soul, so richly gifted with great capacities for pure and wise happiness, is to secure peace, without which no real happiness can be enjoyed.

Stephen's forgiving spirit was like, in kind, to that of Jesus Himself. The Cross, once the most despised of objects, has become the world-wide emblem of the spirit and the mission of the divine Master.

Every man and woman, and probably every boy and girl, has seen how sometimes very wicked people, old or young, have been changed suddenly from badness to goodness by the spirit of Christ.

At the close of the first part of this story there was a very abrupt parting with Saul, the captain of the hosts, who tried to destroy the followers of the Prince of Peace. It occurred just as he approached the beautiful city of Damascus, when, suddenly halted by a voice from the opening heavens, he threw up his commission in the service of his Jewish masters at Jerusalem.

They were trying to turn all the blessed promises of the prophets in favor of the coming Messiah as the Prince of Peace into mere political schemes, and they would substitute a new government, more des-

potic than Rome herself, in place of a wise and wholesome government for the happiness of the people, such as the commandments of Moses had ordered and the great prophet Isaiah had so clearly and sweetly foreshown.

All boys and girls are familiar with the story of Saul's conversion as told in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, although it is not until the thirteenth chapter that we first hear of the same man under his Hebrew name of Paul.

To show how completely Saul surrendered his former commission and trustfully embraced the new faith, it is only necessary to notice that the first order issued to him was to go into the city and there he would find out what was wanted of him. Simple as this order was, he quietly obeyed as part of the same necessary and beautiful faith.

It always should be so in the case of children. They should trust their parents or teachers with a like modest trust, knowing that the result will be for their best good.

Of course you expect this story will be all military, and will understand my references to that life as a struggle. However, I may as well say in advance, that Paul was not always fighting, but in his youth, like all children, was full of fun, enjoying boating, wrestling, and all kinds of athletics. Moreover, he was wonderfully successful in everything he undertook.

Almost all fights between men and beasts or between man and man singly, or in great bodies, were at close quarters. It was therefore necessary for every

part of the body to be protected. Even when, in ancient times, horses and even elephants were used by soldiers, the animals themselves had leather, or iron protection against darts, arrows or sling-shot. The hilts, or handles of the swords, had an open guard of metal to protect the hand from a sword-stroke. Long gloves, known as gauntlets, extended even to the elbow to protect the forearm. The outside of these gauntlets was afterwards made of metal. Separate pieces of metal were provided for each of the limbs and one for the foot, just back of the stirrup. All these parts had to be joined together so that an injury to one would not allow the rest of the armor to fall off. There had to be an extra man, called the armor-bearer, whose duty it was to keep all these pieces of armor in good condition, to fasten them securely together on the soldier's person before a battle and to remove and care for them after a fight.

It was a great expense and labor to prepare an army for battle. Not a member or joint of the human body was left unexamined. When ready to march, every man's armor had to be inspected. His quiver of arrows hung on his back, or his bundle of darts, which he was to hurl at close quarters, had to be counted and their sharpness tested. In those earlier days, fire balls and fiery darts were often hurled either against the man, or the beast upon which he rode. When a soldier was defeated, all his armor became the prize of his opponent, and so, with every victory, the victor gained additional weapons with which to follow up his conquest.

In winning the world for Christ, the Prince of

Peace, the object was not to destroy, but to save, until all nations, peoples, and tongues should choose to accept the blessed and universal reign of the Prince of Peace.

Paul was a voluminous writer, from "first hand" and meant that every Christian should know his duty and be on the watch both by night and day against enemies, seen or unseen.

His great general order is found in the sixth chapter of his letter to the Ephesians:

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, and on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known

with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains.—(Ephesians 6:10-20.)

Now, I want all young people to notice that before the fathers armed themselves for battle, the children and the servants, who had to stay at home, were very kindly, but very sharply, told how they were to behave themselves, and that they also, were to "do their service with the good will as to the Lord," and that whatever good thing they did would be received by the Lord Jesus as done to Him.

His general order, which I shall now explain, was addressed as follows:

"To the faithful in Jesus Christ, who are at Ephesus"; and while he describes in full the armor to be worn in battle, he quietly adds, and very appropriately, the wrestler's special quality for real success, viz., "Having done all; to stand!"

The loins were, first, to be under perfect control, as well as every possible faculty or energy in the perfecting of the soldier of the Cross for every active duty.

Paul even defines who are the enemies to be fought. He describes the Christian warfare in such simple terms that every Greek, Roman, Hebrew or stranger throughout the Roman empire could grasp at a glance his order and comprehend its injunctions. The inventory of his armor is properly in place, just here:

1st. "Loins Firmly Girded."

To give muscular action of stomach and bowels, their subordination to all necessary muscular activity, without dislocation or strain.

2nd. "The Breastplate" of Righteousness.

Primary protection of vital organs such as lie behind the skeleton frame, their natural defense.

3rd. "Feet Shod" with the preparation of the Gospel.

An essential preparation for wrestling, or the race, or a firm stand.

4th. "The Shield of Faith."

A defense against distant foes, whether idolaters, or skeptics; and short thrusts at close quarters.

5th. "The Helmet" of Salvation.

To protect the brain, give steadiness of purpose and firmness of will against every assault.

6th. "The Sword" of the Spirit.

For final struggle at close quarters when all merely protective armor must give place to a life or death issue.

At Rome, Paul lived in his own hired house, kindly treated by high and low, until in the lapse of time he fell a victim to the rage of Nero.

In Rome, however, although under a nominal guard, he never relaxed his service for his great Captain of Salvation, the Prince of Peace. His wonderful letters written from that imperial city went forth to churches and efficient co-laborers throughout the then known world.

And so it is that this exalts in my own mind the humble dwelling place of Paul at Rome to a higher plane of outlook and power. It appears to me, as I write, no longer as below the level of Roman luxury and outlook, but rather, as if on the "Capitoline Hill,"

itself, with open windows every way within the observant recognition of all Christian believers, wherever the Roman Eagles reigned supreme, and that these same believers were simply awaiting a signal from this great captain's waving torch, like a marshal's baton, as an order: "March on! March on!! Fight on! The Prince of Peace is final Victor! Immortal crowns await your service!!"

And, now, for nearly two thousand years, the banner of the Cross, under which Paul served as its great captain, has been advancing toward universal dominion, and the entire world still honors with increasing respect and soul-devotion, the memory of Paul the soldier.

QUESTIONS

How did Paul change from a persecutor to a soldier of Jesus?

Who was Paul's Captain?

What does he write about warfare?

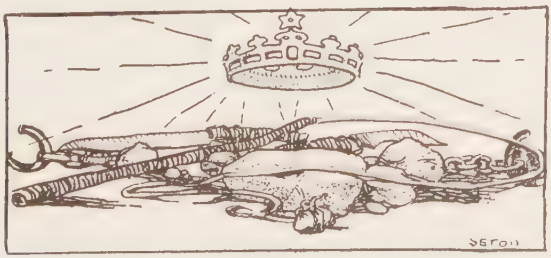
Against whom did he fight?

What weapons did he use?

What did he say to his young friend about fighting?

Who is to win the victory?

Who is the Prince of Peace?



CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE WAR THAT DESTROYED JERUSALEM*

THE total destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish capital, by the youthful but able soldier, Titus, the heir and successor of Vespasian to the throne of the mighty Roman Empire, in the seventieth year of the Christian Era, after so many centuries of glory, wealth and splendor, was the closing event in the history of Jewish independence.

Its famous Temple, first erected by Solomon, but destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and rebuilt by Nehemiah, had been enlarged and adorned at enormous cost by King Herod himself, so that the people from all directions might annually gather, as previously, at their Passover Feast, to celebrate their deliverance by Moses from Egyptian bondage.

That Temple, in the year A. D. 70, was in ruins. Its choicest treasures, including that most precious seven-branch candlestick of solid gold, became a prize in the palace of the conqueror at Rome.

The tragedy of the Cross shocked the world!

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*In the preparation of this chapter General Carrington has been greatly assisted by Mrs. Carrington.

Believers in Jesus multiplied in every direction. Every sentence of His teachings, and His every act of mercy, was but the endorsement of the words and acts of the promised Messiah. Robberies and various forms of violence increased in all the streets and market places of the doomed Jewish capital. All manner of conflicting opinions between various races, as they gathered in public or private places, were of constant occurrence; and even the garrison of Castle Antonia, headquarters of the Roman garrison, was not safe from violence and murder.

Every year added to the provocations which impelled proud Rome to hasten the fate of the doomed city.

And yet, with all these admonitory signs of impending ruin, "Jerusalem was a joy to look upon." Built chiefly upon two opposing hills, overlooking a deep intervening valley and foothills, it was remarkable for its beautiful situation, as well as admirably adapted for systematic defense. Its very name, Salem, which meant "peace," could be traced back to that Salem mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of Exodus, where, more than two thousand years before the birth of Christ, Melchizedek was known as the "Prince of Salem, king of peace," and in the fifth and seventh chapters of Hebrews he is cited as typical of Christ Himself.

And now as time sped swiftly, wars and rumors multiplied on every hand, some of them threatening even Rome herself, and a dread of some fearful convulsion pervaded all classes and races. When Pompey, sixty-three years before the date for a promised

Messiah, occupied the beautiful Castle Antonia there had been repeated assaults, and many of the garrison were killed. Another attempt of a similar kind was urging Vespasian to attack the city as soon as possible. Its defenses were being rapidly strengthened. Both Josephus, the distinguished Jewish general, and Tacitus, a distinguished Roman general and historian, vie with each other in a description of the fortifications in and around Jerusalem. We have no space to describe at length the city itself. The temple must be noticed, as built of massive blocks of red marble fifty feet in length, twenty-four feet in breadth, and fifteen feet in thickness.

Opposition to the rule of Vespasian, in more quarters than one in his vast empire, delayed the movement against Jerusalem. Cestius Gallus, however, advanced with quite a strong army and partly invested the city; but his force was not large enough for a complete investment, nor for direct assault from all sides at once, so that he might absolutely shut up within its walls all of its defenders.

In fact the siege was practically raised, and the instructions of Jesus Himself, while still living, to make their escape from the city as soon as they saw a besieging army approach it, were so eagerly obeyed, that, as He promised them, not a Christian was killed in the destruction of Jerusalem.

At length Vespasian was prepared to strike the final and fatal blow.

He transferred the chief command to his son Titus, afterwards his successor as emperor, and the young soldier took command in person. All approaches to

the city were at once closed by strong embankments with redoubts. Bastions and towers were erected not only for defense of the besieging army against sallies from the besieged garrison, but to form the basis for slow advancement. Other trenches were

ROMAN SOLDIERS BEARING AWAY THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK FROM THE TEMPLE

laid until the approaches advanced near enough to the city to warrant an assault, even upon the gates themselves. Towers of defense had been built to the height of sixty feet. Movable towers had therefore to be built that could be moved so closely to the walls that

soldiers could fight on a level with their defenders. Immense timbers, like levers, with a short arm fastened to the earth, were planted so that to the long arm vast stones could be suspended. Then strong men pulled the lever to the earth and when the ropes were cut this machine, called a "catapult," let fly the suspended rock into the besieged city itself.

All water courses, wells, and springs, as well as orchards and gardens, about Jerusalem were strongly occupied, thereby to defeat any possible sally of the besieged to secure food or water for the garrison. Day and night, by reason of the activity of relays of assailants, not an hour of respite from the incessant slaughter was granted to those in the doomed city.

All this time no one could go inside the city or come forth, without the watchful Romans defeating their plans.

Many nationalities made their homes or conducted business ventures, in Jerusalem. Great wealth had been accumulated, and at the beginning of the siege the inhabitants had a feeling of quiet security.

After a little while, however, provisions began to grow scarce. The people even fought for wells, fruit stands, meat stalls, and every kind of place for the storage of food and water. Individual stores of precious stones and coins became objects of plunder, because of the desperate conditions prevailing and the absence of a peaceful police force. Nothing but fighting was on everybody's mind, night and day.

Children first, and then mothers, and invalids generally, began to suffer for want of food and rest. There was no sleep, and with it all, an increasing, des-

perate hunger, until mothers even killed their children for want of other food, and disease began so to prevail that burials of the dead, and the removing of accumulating filth, became impossible.

The leaders lost confidence in each other, and began in turn, to hunt safe places for themselves, until there was hardly any reasonable agreement as to what the wiser course would be to relieve the ever increasing suffering, destitution and despair.

This feeling of insecurity on the part of the leaders soon communicated itself to the people, whose hearts failed within them as they contemplated the ruin that was soon to overtake their city and homes. Fear was in every heart, and, instead of banding together to meet with fortitude their fate, unhappily they allowed themselves to be rent by quarrels and internal dissensions. Forsaken, as they felt, by God and man, nothing remained for them but complete and unconditional surrender to the enemy.

The siege began in April, A. D. 70, and on July 17 sacrifices ceased, because there were none to offer them. Soon the city was taken by Titus, and fell amid awful carnage and scenes too shocking to recall.

"Not a stone was left upon another that was not thrown down."

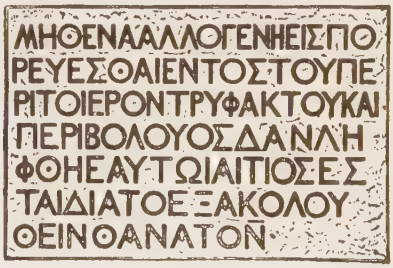
The calendar of the Gentile world advances.

The mutual obligation of Christian and Jew begins.

Human history finds its only sound solution.

Jerusalem had possessed a population, during that period, of about three million souls. Josephus, the ablest soldier and historian of that period, has stated that when Cestius Gallus suspended his investment,

for want of sufficient force at his command, vast numbers made their escape from the city like rats from a sinking ship. He also estimated the loss of life during the siege at eleven hundred thousand. History also verifies the fact that of the followers of Jesus who followed His warnings, when the investment began, and who left the city, not one was lost.



The One Remaining Stone of the Temple

They sought refuge elsewhere and formed portions of that fertilizing and redeeming force which introduced the Kingdom of Heaven among men.

Wherever they went, even for a transient home, they maintained their racial patriotism, their racial household loyalty, their racial industry, their racial intellectuality, and their keen appreciation of music, wise statesmanship, and sound "Moral Law."

Ostracized, sneered at, spit upon, and subjected to even sorer persecutions in other lands, not a single nation that eventually acquired commercial and business success failed to benefit by the Jews' practical standards of living and of economical citizenship.

In the United States of America, more than one

million of these people hold citizenship and honor our flag.

They are citizens of the world at large, once known as the Gentile world, rather than exclusively of any climate or country.

Are the Christians of America just to the Jew?

Is there not in the fundamental basis of their religious faith and history the vital germ of a grace that shall partake of that so generally conceded to Christ, himself, and in time produce a more genial fraternity, and accomplish the alliance of humanity at large?

Has not the time come when the very suggestion of Jerusalem as in ruins, as a City, may be absorbed by the spirit of her historic records and these be made more fully to bless mankind so long as earth shall furnish habitation for his soul?

QUESTIONS

Who erected the first temple at Jerusalem?

What became of that temple?

Who erected the temple that was standing in Jesus' day?

Who destroyed it?

What can you tell about that war?

Where were the sacred vessels carried?

Whose words were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem?

CHAPTER XLIX

THE VICTORY OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

THE editor of this series of books for young people requested a soldier to write these chapters on the military aspects of the history and letters of the apostolic age. The task was willingly accepted, and the pen that wrote these chapters has been guided by one who from his early manhood has held the sword, and who still, though retired from active service, bears the commission of his country as an officer in the regular army.

In my boyhood, on every 4th of July, I watched with intense interest the surviving veterans of the Revolution who filled carriages and received the homage of all ages of patriotic men and women and stimulated the young folks to new interest in the history of the great war for American independence. And I can never forget my indignation when I found that the sword of my great grandfather was desecrated by a laboring man who used its old blade for cutting cornstalks, one autumn season, and I still have the manuscript of a sermon delivered by another great grandfather to his people the Sunday before he started

at the head of his own parishioners to protect our northern boundary and capture Quebec in 1759.

Military traditions surrounded my boyhood and youth; and in my young manhood occurred a terrible war.

On May 18, 1861, I received my commission as Colonel, on the same day with General Sherman and other officers. I soon became Adjutant General, and many of the bravest of our generals in the great war of 1861-5 I personally commissioned as soldiers of the great Republic. After the peace at Appomatox in 1865, I remained in the regular army, and for many years upon the plains did my duty as a soldier in wars with the Indians.

And yet I write as a friend of peace, and as a firm believer in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself alone! The seed that dieth, that it may reproduce its kind, and the subtle pollen that is wafted by vagrant winds to some distant ocean isle that has been prepared for vegetation by the wear of storm or volcanic force, is but a faint emblem of the spread of the political, social and religious enlightenment that shall hereafter fall like healing balm upon the famishing millions who moan and pray for deliverance from the slavery of their benighted condition.

The culmination of human invention is near at hand. With wireless telegraphy, by which the most distant voice may penetrate your bed chamber, and invisible creation may respond to your call by quick recognition, the human mind must become more

conscious of its own divine source, and in some degree realize that prayer and praise may enter the ear of the Almighty Creative Father, without misgiving or doubt, and receive in return corresponding spiritual strength, guidance, and support in all matters conformable to His gracious and beneficent will. The one great need for man is that he conform his own finite will to the divine, and thus ensure that domestic harmony and peace which everywhere in nature has proven to be essential to order and happiness throughout the Universe of God.

The institution of the Hague Tribunal had for its chief objective the pacification of hostile temper and purely selfish aggrandizement. It sought to enhance the self-respect of both the stronger and weaker nations by a responsible assurance that the rights of each would be respected upon the common ground of a just and responsible humanity.

This is the sentiment of the civilized world today, and every tender of regard by the United States for the peace of the world is accepted by all nations as sincere and worthy of tribute. The very suggestion of imperialism, or despotic aggression upon the rights of any, when tested by an English dictionary, excites mingled pity and mirth only. But the declaration of the "Golden Rule" as the settled maxim of American diplomacy has been accepted in good faith by the world at large, and the recent action of the "Inter-Parliamentary Congress or Union" at our national capital shows that no eccentricities of an American presidential campaign can weaken the faith of those distinguished representatives of European govern-

ments, or disturb the pulse of the peace-loving American people, whatever be their racial origin or their party relation.

It has become, literally, a "Human Race question." And the marvel of the hour is that the world does not see that every possible horror of war, every possible fruitage of the present increase of crime against person and property, every aroused and encouraged antagonism between classes, races and sections, here and everywhere, are but the concurrent agencies that trifle with this vast problem, and even expand its sphere of mischief and terror, regardless of the Golden Rule and all that makes for national honor and domestic peace! This state of affairs cannot and will not last, unless, through the methods of a ruling Providence, to verify ancient predictions of the fate of man when he shall defy both God and man in his thirst for blood.

Surely the nations groaning under war burdens, the peoples impoverished by brutal waste of life and treasure, must assert their rights and say to each other, "You shall not immolate yourself, nor jeopardize the peace of the world any longer." There must be somewhere and somehow a just measure of the rights of nations, and to ignore these wholly, is to challenge all nations to a common defence against such suicidal and destructive energies as are loose and rampant for slaughter. America offers the "Golden Rule" as her panacea for the sore afflictions with which war has visited all mankind. The only danger is, by thus ignoring its precepts in individual life, as well as in political cabals and devices, that the national conscience will be so benumbed as to be reck-

less of its demands, or selfish enough to despise them for ambition, greed or power.

This hour of peril however and this somber shadow

THE REIGN OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

will not fail to find its adequate compensation when the quickened conscience of aroused humanity shall focalize its vast capacities for good upon these disturbing enemies of universal peace, and shall unitedly up-

hold every honest endeavor of every grade and type of citizenship in behalf of virtue, honesty and integrity in every department of domestic, social, religious and political life. The Hague Tribunal, happily conceived, and heartily endorsed by the United States, has but just entered upon its mission. However long may be the consummation of a substantial peace, the world cannot but honor those who initiated the movement. The powers for good are infinitely stronger, if not so noisily announced, as are the powers of evil, and Universal Peace will triumph! Blessed be those people that merge all minor and selfish material interests in the silent, unremitting, irresistible purpose that the human race, man, universal man, shall be the objective of their sympathy, their prayers, and, if need be, their arms, until the "Golden Rule" shall have universal sway, and peace on earth, with "good-willing" men alone in charge of every responsible trust, shall harvest the fruit of harmonious endeavor.

QUESTIONS

Who came to bring peace on earth?

What has Jesus done to bring peace?

What has been done in recent years to bring peace nearer?

What should all good citizens hope for?

Who is the rightful King of nations?

CHAPTER L

THE LETTERS OF PETER.

AUL wrote many letters. Peter, so far as we know, wrote only two. Peter wrote from Babylon, by which term some people suppose he meant Rome. Silvanus was with him, and so was Mark, whom Peter had come to love so much that he calls him "my son."

He wrote to the people who had not seen Jesus, but who loved Him:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom,

though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven: which things angels desire to look into.—(I. Peter 1:3-12.)

He charges them to be loving, obedient to God, and faithful to Jesus who had given himself for them:

Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, ye shall be holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear: knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner

of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ: who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake, who through him are believers in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For,

All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass.
The grass withereth, and the flower falleth:
But the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.—(I. Peter 1:13-25.)

He tells us that we cannot be harmed in our spiritual life if we are true to God.

Then he adds the postscript, which shows us how Mark was with him, doubtless learning many of the facts which he wrote down in his Gospel:

By Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I account him, I have written unto you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God: stand ye fast therein. She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son. Salute one another with a kiss of love.

Peace be unto you all that are in Christ.—(1. Peter 5:12-14.)

Peter's second letter is shorter, but has some passages of great beauty. There is one about the precious promises of God, which are able to make us like Christ: and about the way we are to add one virtue to another till our life is complete:

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling

and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—(II. Peter 1:1-11.)

He knows that they already know many of these things, but he is sure that they need to be reminded even of the things that are familiar:

This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance; that ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles.—(II. Peter 3:1-2.)

He tells us not to be impatient, remembering that God has ages in which to work out his plan:

But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.—(II. Peter 3:8-9.)

And he exhorts us to be patient and faithful:

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight.—(II. Peter 3:14.)

He knows that Paul has been writing letters which some people have misunderstood, but he is sure that

the great truths are simple truths, and that those who grow in grace will never fall from grace:

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen.—(II. Peter 3:15-18.)

This is the end of this beautiful letter, which begins by telling those to whom he wrote to add to their faith, and which ends with a lesson about growing in grace. Peter knew about growing in grace. He had grown.

QUESTIONS

Who was Peter?
What was his other name?
Who named him Peter?
What does Peter mean?
How many letters did he write?
To whom did he write?
What have you learned from these letters

CHAPTER LI

THE LETTERS OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE

JOHN was a "son of thunder" when he first came to Jesus. When he had learned the lesson of Jesus, he was the "beloved disciple." He lived to be a very old man, and used to come into the congregation, leaning upon two young men, and when he was too old to preach, he would stand and say, "Little children, love one another."

When he was old, he wrote a letter, full of light and love. These are the two words that we find over and over in this letter. He tells us that he is writing of Jesus, that those to whom he wrote might have part in His fellowship:

That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us): that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you

also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full.—(I. John 1:1-4.)

Then he goes on to tell us of light and love:

And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.—(I. John 1:5-10.)

He wants us to feel sure that this is nothing new, but the first and oldest of all the commandments:

Beloved, no new commandment write I unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning: the old commandment is the word which ye heard. Again, a new commandment write I unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth. He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him. But he that

hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.—(I. John 2:7-11.)

In this spirit of love he writes to children, to fathers, and to young men. These are very beautiful words:

I write unto you, my little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye know him who is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil one. I have written unto you, little children, because ye know the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know him who is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.—(I. John 2:12-17.)

God is love; and he that abideth in love, abideth in God and God abideth in him. Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love, be-

cause he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also. —(I. John 4:16-21.)

John also wrote two other letters, and they are very short. Each of them contains a chapter, and only one chapter, and that is a short one. So if you are interested you may take your Bibles and look them up, and read these two interesting little letters.

QUESTIONS

Who was the beloved disciple?
Why is he called by this name?
How many of his letters do we have?
To whom were they written?
What are they about?
What have you learned from them?

CHAPTER LII

THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

IN a time of great persecution, when Christians were giving their lives for their faith, the Apostle John was imprisoned on an island called Patmos. It may have been at the time of the very persecution under Nero in which Peter and Paul are believed to have been killed. It was a time when very many good people were almost discouraged, for evil seemed to triumph, and good to bring sorrow to those who sought it.

I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with

a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and

"What Thou Seest, Write"

his voice as the voice of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid

his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.—(Revelation 1:9-20.)

John wrote the letters to the seven churches, as he was bidden, encouraging the Christians in the midst of their persecutions. Part of what he had to say he told plainly, but there were some things which it would not have been safe to tell in that way. It would have made the persecution only the more terrible. So when he wanted to tell that he was writing about the terrible Roman government which was persecuting the Church, he described a wicked woman riding on a terrible beast with seven heads, and said that the heads were the hills on which the woman sat, and that the woman was the city that ruled over the nations. Many people think he even went farther, and told that he had Nero in mind; for he said that there were seven kings, and that he was writing in the reign of the sixth, whose name spelled six hundred sixty-six. And the name Nero in Hebrew spells that number. But some people do not agree, and they feel sure that we are able to follow his method so closely as to be able to tell this; though the plan is interesting to know.

This is the way the official name of Nero, which was Neron Caesar, makes the total of six hundred sixty-six:

N (e)=50, R=200, O=6, N=50, C (ae)=100, S (a)=60, R=200,——666.

THE HOLY CITY

If John really wanted those to whom he wrote to understand that he was writing about Nero, that would have been a good way to conceal it from those who read Latin or Greek, but to make it known to Hebrew reading Christians.

The wicked persecuting city is overthrown, and falls like a millstone into the sea; and a mighty angel coming down from heaven, binds Satan and shuts him up where he cannot harm those who serve God.

Instead of the hateful city on the seven hills that persecuted the saints, or the Jerusalem where the Lord had been crucified, John had a vision of another city, a new city, more beautiful than Jerusalem, more powerful than Rome:

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse

any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face: and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.—(Revelation 21:10, 22-26; 22:1-5.)

It is a comfort to think that part of this blessedness is for our friends in heaven. Yet it is not all reserved for heaven. The holy city descends to earth in the love and reverence and faith of those who make their hearts a tabernacle for God. We are taught to pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Even so let us pray in faith that this shall be. We, too, have our Patmos, and we may have our vision and our hope.

We started out with the apostles, a little frightened band, who shuddered round the empty tomb of Jesus, hardly daring to believe in the resurrection. We have followed them in their journeys and in their letters, until we have seen the triumph of their faith. They went out and preached their Gospel in all the world as they knew the world, and it remains for us to tell it in all the world as we know the world. The world we know is not the world they knew; it is a vastly larger, greater world, and a world changed by the Gospel they preached. And the skies above have changed with our better knowledge of God. Whatever the future may bring forth of glorious surprise, we have seen enough already of what the Gospel has

done for the world to believe in the vision of the beloved apostle. We live in a new earth and a better earth; and we live under a new heaven, where God and love abide eternally.

QUESTIONS

How many islands have we read about in this book?
Where is Patmos?
Who was imprisoned there?
What did he see?
What did he write?
What vision did John have?
What is our hope for coming ages?
How much have you learned from this book?